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NOTES.

"I cannot congratulate you on the results of the war, but I can congratulate you on the calmness with which you have taken them." That in substance is the Duke of Devonshire's reading of the situation, and it aptly expresses public feeling at this moment. News from the front is certainly not too pleasant, but to speak of doubts as to the ultimate result of the war is mere panic. Clearly our task in South Africa is, as the Duke admitted at York, a very different one from what we imagined. It is right to realise as much, but that is not to be despondent. The very difficulties we are encountering, the unexpected strength, and perfect preparedness of the Boers, the wavering, if not hostile attitude of too many of the Cape Dutch, but emphasises the necessity of the final struggle for mastery in South Africa. We are glad that the Duke of Devonshire rested the case for the war on that basis: that is the cause of war, whatever may have been its occasion. But it is regrettable that the Duke, with Mr. Balfour, had nothing to say to the real charge against the Government, their dilatoriness in preparation and remissness in leaving South Africa so long unprotected.

The subject of artillery has been much talked about of late; and it has been generally asked why the lyddite batteries were so late in starting? An answer is of course ready to hand. They were corps artillery; and as the dispatch of the divisions was then considered urgent, the former had to wait. But the question really goes much deeper than this, and is a pertinent commentary on the policy now in vogue of assimilating all branches of the service on one model. As a result we have recently seen the post of the Deputy-Adjutant-General for Royal Artillery—the representative of that arm at the War Office—abolished, with the necessary consequence that there is now no superior artillery official directly responsible at headquarters.

No doubt it greatly simplifies matters to have no separate and distinct D.-A.-G.'s at headquarters. It is true the Engineers still possess one. But his post, too, is practically doomed. The point however is really this. Is not the artillery too important to be dealt with thus, and have our headquarter staff—the majority of whom are infantrymen—the requisite technical knowledge to manage affairs without the advice of a high and responsible Royal Artillery official? The various types of guns in use has obviously nothing to do with the abolition or retention of the post. All such matters

were settled long ago, and the D.-A.-G. was not directly connected with the choice. Moreover it is early yet to say that the choice was not judicious. Still an artillery D.-A.-G. would probably have strongly advocated the early dispatch of the guns. One thing at least is clear. The artillery—like their comrades of the infantry—whatever may have been done to hamper them in higher places, have done their work magnificently.

So far the most satisfactory features in the war have been the way in which the mobilisation arrangements have worked and the reservists have behaved. Many have hitherto doubted whether the reserve was really a tangible force. Now that doubt is set at rest, and Lord Wolseley has secured a great triumph for the system he has so long and strenuously worked for. There is however room for improvement in at any rate one detail. The reservist's civilian clothes are not stored for him while he is serving. The result is that he often sells them for a mere song, and on his return to civil life will not be gratified at receiving the shockingly inferior suit of clothes which is considered good enough for a reservist to wear. Yet at the depôts, when the reserve clothing has been issued, there would be plenty of room to store the man's own clothes. He could then receive the value of the Government suit.

The war is bringing us all nearer one to another. The process of closing up is now complete; and the meeting of the general committee of the National Liberal Federation on Wednesday gave it the final touch. Both the terms of the resolution passed and the meeting's demeanour made it perfectly clear that the inner circle of Liberalism was determined that party politics should not interfere with patriotism. It was distinctly recognised that now that we are in for this struggle, we must go through with it—no matter what happens and at whatever cost—successfully. No other consideration can have weight until that is done. Other interests must stand aside. The whole tone of the Liberal meeting, which represented both wings of the party, was eminently satisfactory, nor can any fault be found with the reservation of the right to criticise the Government both as to its diplomacy and its preparation for war. Indeed on the latter count, it is easy to conceive that criticism will not be entirely unsuccessful.

The policy of the German Navy Bill must have been decided on, and we should imagine even its clauses drafted, before the war broke out in South Africa.

Governments do not make up their minds to take a new departure, involving large taxation, in a fortnight or even a month. It seems therefore absurd to suppose that either the bill or Count von Bülow's speech had any special reference to the military events of the last few days. Count von Bülow and his colleagues are old enough parliamentary hands to make it appear as if an addition to the German navy was imperatively demanded by the events in the Transvaal. Count von Bülow's references to England and the war were a model of diplomatic ambiguity and correctness.

"No one can say," declared the German Foreign Secretary, "no one can predict, what the consequence will be of the war which has set South Africa in flames during the last few weeks;" and a second time he alluded to "the war in South Africa, which has seriously affected our interests." In other words Count von Bülow told the Reichstag that he was not sure whether England was going to annex the whole of South Africa, or whether she was going to be beaten out of the country by the Boers; but that it behoved Germany to be prepared with a bigger navy for either event. We cannot complain of the German Ministry using the Transvaal war as an argument for a larger navy in view of a possible re-partition of territory, nor can we object to the studiously courteous language in which these hints were conveyed to the German nation. The only unpleasant thing for us is that recent events should have made it possible to seriously speculate upon the result of the war.

A very interesting speech was made the following day by Herr Bebel, the leader of the Social Democrats in the Reichstag, who failed to see what connexion the South African war had with the German navy. "If England should be defeated in that war her position as a world-power will not be shaken, and there is no need for us to sharpen our claws in order ultimately to enter upon the inheritance of the British Empire. The defeat of England will have consequences of an entirely different nature. The English people will come to the conclusion that their military system is a mistake and will adopt the militia system." It is impossible that England should be defeated in South Africa, but Herr Bebel's judgment of what the English people would do if they were defeated shows a profound and original mind. It is moreover what the English people will do, after they have beaten the Boers.

It is pleasant to be able to record a real step in the direction of common-sense liberalism in Germany. There is an old law against "combinations" in Germany, a law which prevents, for example, local political clubs or trades unions from combining in a central organisation. The law is to a large extent ineffective but from time to time it places a vexatious weapon in the hands of some fussy and intolerant official. When the new Civil Code was under discussion three or four years ago, an attempt was made to insert a clause expressly granting liberty of combination but Prince Hohenlohe objected on the ground that such provision was of "too political a nature" to be incorporated in a permanent Civil Code. At length however he assented to a motion for the repeal of the obnoxious law and as the proposal was supported by the National Liberals, the Radicals, and the Clericals it secured an overwhelming majority. This concession it is hoped may be taken to signify the tacit dropping of the "penal servitude bill" which has benefited nobody but the extreme Socialists, and it seems to indicate the direction in which the Emperor may look for support in his appeal for more ships.

German commercial enterprise has just found a new field for its development. An important firm in Hamburg, having relations with Jewish traders in South Africa, is now making arrangements through its agents for the purchase of any loot from the Boer camps that may fall into British hands. It is foreseen that in the stress of a campaign many articles would be obtainable at a mere fraction of their value which in England will command a high price as war relics. The idea,

coming from those who have helped to supply the Boers with arms, is exceedingly ingenious, and might be advantageously adopted for the relief of our soldiers' families. Very soon many Boer camps should fall into British hands, and officially authenticated war relics, arms and accoutrements, or even fragments of the shells our brave fellows had to face, could easily be brought back by returning trains that have conveyed stores and ammunition to the front. Sales of such "war relics"—say at the Crystal Palace and in our large provincial towns—would realise an immense sum. It would certainly afford a grim satisfaction to many brave British soldiers to reflect that among such relics sold in England fragments of the shot and shell they have to face were being converted into gold for the benefit of their dear ones at home.

The debate on the Colonial Estimates in the French Chamber furnishes on the whole satisfactory reading. It demonstrates that at the Colonial as well as at the Foreign Office France has a statesman who can boast a clear conception of her interests. We hardly venture to believe, though we would fain hope, that a long and prosperous period of office is before M. Decrais as well as M. Delcassé. As in the House of Commons, so in the Chamber, the discussion of the estimates furnishes the happy hunting season of the man with one idea. Every legislature has the bores it deserves. The Chamber has its M. Etienne, who, having once been Under Secretary for the Colonies, offers a yearly review of the Colonial Empires of the world.

M. d'Estournelles, who sees "Yellow" and finds the Chinaman everywhere as some of our legislators see Jesuits and Muscovites, calls upon the Government to prevent the partition of China. Without indulging in any sweeping declarations as to future action M. Decrais associated himself with M. Delcassé's views on the wisest colonial policy for France. Many years of patient effort will be required to evolve substantial profits out of the enterprises of the past twenty years. As do all clear-sighted Frenchmen, M. Decrais recognises that the burden which these dependencies have been casting upon the National Exchequer must, by some means or other, be lightened. This policy has been sensibly inaugurated by concluding contracts for the construction of railways in Indo-China, where trade shows a satisfactory increase. If M. Decrais can only enlist French capital and enterprise in the advancement of their own colonies he will have deserved well of his country. He has a hard task before him, but it is highly satisfactory that he recognises peaceful consolidation and not irritating aggression as the true statesmanship for France.

It is by no means certain that General Mercier will be sent to the Senate by the electors of the Loire-Inférieure district. The invitation was made by a party of Nationalists who had defended him throughout the Dreyfus case, but even their efforts have not entirely succeeded in blotting out the ugly impression left by the General's shifty and sinister evidence. They are still canvassing; they are still seeking to persuade the electors that they will show their confidence in the army by voting for the General, they are still carrying on a "patriotic" campaign in the local newspapers. The Royalists and Catholics, however, possess the greatest power of any party in this particular district, and, strange though it may seem, do not appear inclined to accept General Mercier. They argue that he has never aided the Royalist cause and, also, that he has not shown sufficient respect for the Church—they think, no doubt, that neither their cause nor their Church would benefit much by the support of a man whose name bears so vivid and inefaceable a stain. We do not agree with certain writers in the socialistic press that the General's chance is "hopeless," but we do agree with M. Clémenceau that his success would be altogether "lamentable."

The Labori libel case has, as everyone expected, ended in the condemnation of the "Libre Parole." Although the great lawyer's friends argued that it was

scarcely worth while to notice the odious articles that accused him of "shamming" or suggested his not having been "shot at all," M. Labori determined, in spite of their advice, to seize this opportunity of making M. Drumont either apologise or pay. Since the author of "La France Juive" refused to withdraw his words (or rather to make his contributors withdraw theirs), he will now have to spend twenty-four thousand francs in quoting the verdict of the Court in two hundred and forty Parisian and provincial newspapers. Notice of appeal has, of course, been lodged but that does not damp the satisfaction of M. Labori's friends. Among the witnesses for the prosecution was Colonel Picquart who, it will be remembered, started off in pursuit of the would-be assassin. He could not keep up with him; "eleven months in prison," he said in Court, "had left me feeble." The doctors who attended Maître Labori also gave evidence, and considered themselves insulted by M. Drumont's "doubts." They, like their patient, however, have had satisfaction and, we hope, taught M. Drumont and his scandalous staff a lesson that they will not easily forget.

The towers, pavilions, museums and restaurants that are rapidly springing up on the banks of the Seine promise a striking display. About the Champs de Mars there is the same animation and everywhere, in short, where surprises are being prepared for the Exhibition. The advanced state of the most important and complicated "attractions" is all the more remarkable when we remember that it was not until after the verdict in the Dreyfus trial that any signs of haste began. The Metropolitan Railway, too, is almost finished and Parisians are assured that they will soon be able to enjoy the advantages of "an underground." Everyone expects to profit by the Exhibition, from the hotel-proprietor downwards. New cafés are in the course of construction, new flats, new shops, new theatres. Dim "pensions" will be equipped with new curtains; hidden hotels will be almost as expensive as the huge; modest flats will fetch a year's rent in a month. So, at least, predicts the bourgeois and, as he has had a disastrous year, we hope that the months of May, June and July will be as fruitful as he prophesies. Would-be newspaper proprietors have proclaimed their intention of issuing a number of new and amazing sheets. Not only will there be a daily paper devoted entirely to "the news of the Exhibition," but journals in German, Italian, English and Russian. At the offices of each there will also be a staff of guides!

The duty of administering the Housing Act is one which the London County Council ought to be able to discharge effectively. But one branch of this duty has been performed in a half-hearted manner, and another has been entirely neglected. When the Conservative Government passed the Act of 1890, they intended it should be used. But the Council has cleared but few slum areas, and has not provided dwellings for anything like the number of people that it has displaced. Power was given it to provide accommodation apart from clearance schemes, but it has not exercised the power. Its executive committee has only just discovered that the power does not extend to the purchase of land outside the county, and a recommendation to seek such an extension of the power is now before the Council. We trust that the Moderates will support the recommendation and will adopt towards the Housing question the same attitude that they have always advocated with regard to street improvements; which is that powers placed in the Council's hands by Parliament ought to be exercised in a loyal, and of course a business-like, spirit.

It is quite clear from the proceedings of the South-Eastern Metropolitan Poor Law Conference, at which Sir Robert Giffen gave the Presidential address, that Poor Law authorities intend to stick to the workhouse, and nothing but the workhouse, as against grants of pensions. But we must point out that with a glorified workhouse in every union the one per cent. of the nation's income, representing the present charge of pauperism, will rise indefinitely; and it must be increased either in work-

house cost or in pension cost. There is remarkable inconsistency in holding that you must not give pensions because the classes on the brink of pauperism require "bracing up" to do without assistance, and at the same time proposing to spend money lavishly for their extra comfort in workhouses. Why not frankly say at once—the workhouses were what they ought to be before the pension agitation, and what they ought to continue to be only perhaps considerably harsher? Make the workhouses places where nobody would shrink from going, and the alleged demoralising dangers of pensions are multiplied. It is hard to see that the abuses of a pension system can by any possibility be so numerous as the abuses of lavish workhouse administration.

The Chairman of the Shoreditch Board of Guardians read a paper on "The Poor Law in Relation to the Aged Poor." He pointed out that for more than fifty years the guardians have had many powers of classification according to character, and the generous supply of out-relief, cottage homes, and the like. But they have not been employed. Why? Simply because the localities interested would not tolerate the expense. This has always been looked on as a precious safeguard against "extravagance." Now it is suggested that a large part of the projected extra costs should be borne by general taxation—the method of a pension scheme. What will become of local economy in that case, and the avoidance of the terrible dangers of pensions?

Lord Russell is a Radical, a staunch and powerful supporter in the past of more than one Radical ministry. One may hope then that our Progressive educationists who tend sadly to the machinist view, will not think it beneath them to take to heart some veritable words of wisdom that fell from Lord Russell's lips the other day when addressing the students of Rutlish Secondary School. "Voluntary effort in education," said the Lord Chief Justice, "prevents absolute sameness and uniformity in the system of teaching, so that boys are not turned out of school as sausages are turned out of a sausage machine, of exactly the same weight and the same length, but some play is left to individual character, to individual teaching."

Lord Penzance owed a great part of his fame to the least glorious chapter of his career. It is doubtful if anyone could have won distinction as judge under that curiously worthless statute the Public Worship Regulation Act, but the late Lord certainly contrived to concentrate on himself an unusual amount of odium. He had to pay the penalty for occupying a false position, but he enjoyed it, which accounts for the sentiments of dislike his name has excited throughout half the Anglican communion for a quarter of a century. Whether Lord Penzance was technically entitled to sit as Dean of Arches, which he probably was not, it is now not worth while to discuss. The only personal feature of interest whereof his death has reminded the public is the strange almost ferocious antipathy which existed between him and Chief Justice Cockburn. Very nearly as deep an enmity separated two equally famous judges, now dead too and to some extent their contemporaries, but it did not find violent public expression as in the case of Lord Penzance and Sir Alexander Cockburn.

When one eliminates ecclesiastical considerations, it is only fair to recognise fully that Lord Penzance was a good lawyer, and a competent judge; to speak of him as distinguished is to exaggerate, unless it is only meant that he was successful in obtaining many posts of distinction. Initial success came to him easily. For his father was a prosperous solicitor who naturally pushed on his clever and diligent son: and then of course he was Lord Truro's nephew. Lord Truro may have been the least distinguished of the century's chancellors, but the shadow of the woolsack is never a bad environment for the barrister old or young. The uncle and nephew had not a few points in common. The latter was certainly a nicer man but he had not a tithe of the Chancellor's ability. Lord Brougham, who detested Wilde and could scarcely find

words to express his chagrin at his being retained as a junior in Queen Caroline's case, did complete justice to his prodigious industry and ability. Lord Penzance was almost a professional Royal Commissioner, on so many of those dull Boards of Enquiry did he sit.

The judges of the Irish Court of Appeal recently have had to interpret a will which gave a curious glimpse into the domestic life of the small farmer class. Michael, a farmer's son, was left the farm on condition that he married and got "a substantial fortune with his wife not less than £250:" and Michael's sisters were to get legacies payable out of the money raised in this ingenious fashion. Michael's first efforts involved him in "an action for breach," and the sheriff seized for damages. Then the other members of the family claimed farm and all, because Michael had failed to marry as he ought to have done. They had the law of it, but we are not concerned with the law but custom and the judicial description of it. Said a judge: This sort of thing is never left to chance: if the son gets the land he must get a fortune for his sisters by going into the marriage market and picking out "a good girl with the necessary amount." Sentiment, good looks, attractiveness are put aside; this causes no delay; the supply in the rural marriage market is looked at, and a virtuous girl with the requisite fortune is easily selected. The father no doubt well knew what, having regard to the farm, was a reasonable sum to fix for a fortune.

There is consternation among Madras politicians because the authorities have found it necessary to rule that masters in State-aided schools are not to take an active part in political movements. "Schoolmasters and lawyers" one of their newspapers plaintively remarks "make up the backbone of political movements in India." Politics to this class, as to a class nearer home, consist chiefly in denunciations of the Government. One is reminded of the reply given by the wittiest of Irishmen to a reverend colleague who asked his advice about withdrawing from political life. "Yes indeed Father —. It is not good for a man of your age to be sitting behind a hedge at night with a blunderbuss waiting for landlords. I think it is time you gave up politics."

It would appear from Mr. Chamberlain's speech on taste in art to the Students of Birmingham that he is inclined to think we must not press the question of taste too much in democratic days. We are afraid this suggests that Mr. Chamberlain is himself too easily satisfied with a standard, well, not of the brightest. There is a certain humour in his leaving the scene of his Leicester performances to instruct the youth of Birmingham in, of all things, the art of taste. Comfort, he teaches us, and not taste must be the guiding spirit in the manufacture of goods for the masses. In the manufacture of speeches for the masses we hope he may keep this idea steadily in view for his own guidance. He cannot be said to have contributed much to the general comfort when he made the speech just referred to. This apart, Mr. Chamberlain's lecture on art was shrewdly bourgeois as might be expected.

The news that Mr. Lathbury's editorship of the "Guardian" has come to an end is the ecclesiastical event of the week. Under his control the leading Anglican journal reached a standard of literary excellence which placed it in the first rank of weekly newspapers, and displayed a breadth of interest and range of sympathy not elsewhere characteristic of the clerical press. Mr. Lathbury ascribes his retirement to a conflict of opinion between himself and the proprietors as to the Archbishops' judgment. Few readers of the "Guardian" will be surprised at this announcement. Moderate Anglicans have for some while past chafed under the complaisance, to say the least, with which the contempt of authority by some of the extreme Ritualists has been received. A change of attitude on this matter is certainly necessary if the reputation of the "Guardian" as the organ par excellence of the English Church is to be recovered; but none the less, Mr. Lathbury's retirement will be received with universal regret.

THE PROGRESS OF THE WAR.

IT is as useless to minimise the gravity of the situation as to exaggerate it. The events of the past week have been disquieting. From Ladysmith more cheering news has certainly come, but as regards the war generally people are naturally asking how it is that an enormous force under picked British generals is unable to make any headway. At the start, when we were so weak in South Africa, all understood the circumstances. But now after two months' fighting people begin to wonder why our armies are still on British territory. The obvious answer is that many are apt to forget how immense is the theatre of war, how long the lines of communication, and how much more complicated matters have become through the incipient, but in some places active, hostility of the Cape Dutch. Still there can be little doubt that while our regiments and regimental officers have acquitted themselves magnificently, the same cannot be said of our generals and staff officers. It was of course inevitable that some should be new to South African conditions. But when we have men of tried experience in this kind of work, it seems a pity not to use them. For instance one can hardly imagine Sir F. Carrington conducting the Stormberg affair as it was conducted.

From Ladysmith we hear of two sorties. On the night of 8 December Sir George White sent General Hunter with 500 Natal Volunteers and 100 Imperial Light Horse to surprise Gun Hill, on which the now notorious "Long Tom" was mounted. The enterprise was brilliantly carried out with trifling loss. The Boers were surprised; "Long Tom" and a howitzer were completely disabled, and a machine gun was captured. Again on the night of the 10th a sortie was made. This time the force consisted of half a Rifle Brigade battalion; and Surprise Hill, on which was mounted a howitzer, was their objective. Reaching the crest of the hill unobserved, they were able to drive the Boers back and destroy the gun. But on this occasion the Boers did not submit without a struggle. They attempted to cut off the riflemen. Although our losses were heavy, they did not succeed in doing so. The work done by the two sorties was of the highest value to Ladysmith. Still it is to be hoped that Sir George White will not be too venturesome in attempting such operations. Happily, we now know, the garrison is still healthy and efficient, and its safety need no longer cause us anxiety. The men have worked splendidly at the trenches and breastworks, and have achieved the remarkable feat of holding a naturally weak position against a much stronger enemy possessed of more powerful ordnance. When Sir Redvers Buller's advance will begin, we have no certain means of knowing. He is still very weak in regular cavalry. Though some impatience is apt to be felt, the delay is a good sign and shows that among our generals the Commander-in-Chief at least is not likely to bring on any more premature engagements. His headquarters are still at Frere. But General Barton's brigade moved forward on the 12th, and occupied a strong position within three miles of Colenso. But no fighting, beyond an occasional brush with the enemy, has recently taken place. Frere and Ladysmith are now in daily communication. In the South things have not been going well. On the 9th General Gatacre, accompanied by two battalions, two batteries, mounted infantry, and engineers, entrained at Putter's Kraal for Molteno. Arrived there he proceeded at 9.30 P.M. to march his men under the guidance of a local policeman towards Stormberg—held in strength by the Boers—the attack of which General Gatacre tells us "seemed to promise certain success." Why this was so, we are not told. The unfortunate column stumbled along in the dark from 9.30 P.M. till 4 A.M., and, after making a long détour, found themselves landed in "an impossible position." The Boers, who evidently expected them, were occupying "an unscaleable hill" from which they at once commenced firing. The British immediately occupied the nearest position they could find, and an unsuccessful attempt was made to turn the Boer flank. Mainly through the efforts of the artillery—who lost 2 guns—our troops were enabled to draw off with the

loss of over 600 men, most of whom are now prisoners. From ridge to ridge they withdrew for 9 miles. At any rate we have this to congratulate ourselves upon: the behaviour and discipline of the troops in as difficult a situation as could well be imagined was perfect. Once again did British regiments save a situation which, through no fault of theirs, might well have become desperate. The official despatch tells us little. But it is at least clear that the column—even had things gone well—was called upon to do work beyond its powers. The men appear to have been under arms from the morning of the 9th, and with only one hour's rest were called upon to attack on the following morning. It seems also incredible that a General should have undertaken so risky an operation in the midst of a hostile population with so little knowledge of the attendant circumstances. What had the Staff been doing? Before risking a night attack, why had not the country been properly reconnoitred? Or, if that was impossible, why was the operation undertaken at all? Then if it was necessary to take a guide, why was not more than one taken? No doubt the effect of the coup, had it succeeded, would have been immense. But did the plan contain even the primary elements of success? It is true the loss of 600 men cannot seriously affect the proceedings of an army containing some 100,000, but its moral effect on the Free State and the Cape Dutch may be considerable. General Gatacre has now gone to Sterkstroom. General French en route to Colesberg, was attacked on 13 December near Vaalkop and after a sharp engagement drove the enemy back, the losses being forty killed and wounded on the Boer side and one killed, seven wounded and one missing on our side.

In the West the railway bridge at Modder was completed on the 7th. A demonstration was made up the line on the 9th with cavalry, infantry and guns. Meanwhile Lord Methuen, who had received reinforcements, had established detached posts on his lines of communication. This was necessary, since a railway culvert had been blown up, and the wire cut at Graspan. To deal with this a field-battery and a battalion were sent from Modder River with the result that Prinsloo's commando of 1,000 were driven off, and railway and telegraph communication reopened. On the north of the Modder the Boers occupied and strengthened a good position at Magersfontein. On the 10th Lord Methuen's artillery shelled it from 4 P.M. till dusk. But during the night the Boers were able to repair the damage done before the Highlanders under General Wauchope—who unhappily fell during the battle—attacked it. They appear to have been unaware of their close proximity to the Boer position, since they were fired upon whilst still in quarter column. From this they naturally suffered heavily, and for the time being were obliged to retire. Again advancing however they reached within 300 yards of their goal. On the right and left also the attacks were weak, and from daybreak the Boers were shelled. At 1.15 P.M. the Gordons were sent to support the Highland brigade. But though the troops held their own in front of 12,000 Boers till dark, the attack failed, and the losses amounted to over 830. Lord Methuen has retired to the Modder River in perfect order, where, according to his own account, he is in perfect safety. The Boer losses at Magersfontein are stated to have been considerable. The main question now is, Will Lord Methuen be able to keep open his communications if either he advances to Kimberley or remains at the Modder River? If he cannot do so, but yet remains at the latter, we may expect another Ladysmith. Should advance be impossible, he must—however regrettable it may be—retire southwards, in which case the hard-fought and apparently premature fight at the Modder River will have been fought in vain. In fact, in his campaign, nearly everything seems to have been done in too great a hurry. From Kimberley the latest despatches relate that the Boers are quiet, but it is not clear what Kimberley was doing on the day of the Magersfontein fight. Mafeking is still bravely holding out: but from a telegram dated the 4th we learn that the Boers are shelling the town with increased vigour and that rations have been reduced, though water is still plentiful. Sir Redvers

Buller cannot be in all places at once. But it is to be hoped that when he has settled matters in Natal, he will go and settle matters in Cape Colony, for there he appears much to be needed. The general situation is not devoid of anxiety. More troops are certainly required. So far we have been able to answer each reverse by the potent argument of another division. But that cannot last for ever.

THE POWERS AND CHINA.

DURING the debate in the Reichstag, last Monday, on the proposed increase of the German fleet, Count von Bulow declared that, in the presence of a "Greater Britain" and a "nouvelle France," Germany had a right to a "Greater Germany." This statement must have reminded his hearers of an earlier speech of his, dealing with the action of Germany at Kiaochau in connexion with the expected dissolution of the Chinese Empire, in which he said that, "Germany had arrived in case anything might happen. The passenger could not be sure when the train would start, but he would take good care not to be left behind, and the devil take the hindmost." This brusque utterance plainly indicated that Germany's Foreign Minister believed that China's fate was sealed past redemption. She is one of those weak nations that are growing weaker, owing to failure to move with the times and put their house in order. Her weakness, and the utter imbecility of her rulers, had been exposed to the world at the time of her war with Japan; she was outraging foreigners by her officials, actually inciting, instead of preventing attacks on their Missions, and by hampering and crippling their trade in every conceivable manner. For centuries upon centuries she had learned nothing and forgotten nothing. Her Government and ruling classes appeared bent on continuing their time-honoured policy of "China for the Chinese, and the Chinese for their rulers," who shear them, mainly for their own benefit, and often take the skin with the fleece. Fear was the only master they would obey. Reform meant the extinction of their perquisites and chances for speculation. They were determined that the old and, to them, satisfactory régime should continue. Patriotism, if it ever existed, was dead amongst them.

Of course we were told that if China would only reform she might yet acquire a fresh lease of life; and that she might even yet be saved from disruption by an alliance of the Great Powers interested in the commerce of the world if her fall would have a damaging influence on their trade. Since then, however, all idea of the Manchu Government carrying out an adequate reform has been quenched by the deposition of the Emperor, who had taken the idea to heart and was bent on carrying it into practice; and China, although twenty-four times the size of Japan and containing nearly ten times its inhabitants, has a revenue far less than that of her energetic and advanced neighbour. She is, therefore, utterly devoid of the means of defence. Again, the acceptance of the "open door" policy in relation to commercial China by Germany, France, and Japan, and even by Russia, so far as her present leasehold in the Chinese dominions is concerned, has removed the bone of contention which might have led to an Alliance for the defence of mutual interests. All has thus been seemingly made smooth for the disruption of China and the parcelling of it out amongst the holders of spheres of influence at some future date, depending upon the carver of the first slice. Germany, France, Japan, and Great Britain all have their eyes expectantly fixed upon Russia, whose action will, in all probability, not be long delayed after the completion of the Siberian-Pacific Railway to Port Arthur, which is rapidly being pushed on and is expected to be finished in three or four years at the latest. It is true that France, which for many years has been deluded with the hope of dividing Asia with Russia or, at the least, dividing China with her, has at length discovered the reasonableness of Lord Beaconsfield's statement that "in Asia there is room for all." She has learned through her Foreign Minister that her Indo-Chinese Empire is already twice as large as France and that it will be well to turn her eyes from China to Eastern Siam. The

Anglo-French Declaration of 1896, which neutralised Central Siam, left Eastern Siam as a tempting morsel for the future consumption of France. By its absorption the French Indo-Chinese Empire would be increased by one half its present size. With this single exception, M. Delcassé—and his view has this week been endorsed by M. Decrais—considers that France should remain satisfied with the present limits of her African and Asiatic Empire which already forms "a territory eight or ten times as large as the mother-country." This is not a small slice of the world for a nation of stay-at-home people, which "no longer augments in numbers." So little indeed is he in love with the idea of adventure in China that he considers it a moot question, which he leaves to be settled by the French Chambers, whether the recent French acquisition of the bay and neighbourhood of Kwan-chau-wan should be retained by France or returned to China.

What has Great Britain done to prepare for eventualities? Two years have already passed since Russia commenced her occupation of Port Arthur, and nearly as long a period has gone by since we obtained our sphere of interest in the Yangtze Basin—one must not yet call it a sphere of influence, for Mr. Brodrick has declared that the Government has not adopted the Sphere of Influence policy. But, whatever our sphere may at present be called, it is our sphere and we ought to be taking steps towards fixing our grip on it and preserving the peace in it during the troublous times that are ahead. The proceedings that our Government intends to take with reference to the Yangtze Valley were detailed by Mr. Brodrick during the debate on China last June. They all went in the right direction, but, taken together, they fell far short of the necessary preparations that should be made in order to secure our position and interests in the face of coming events. It is imperative that we should take steps towards making ourselves known and our power felt in the whole of the Yangtze region. France is doing so for herself in Kwangsi and Yunnan, Germany in Shantung, and Russia in Manchuria, and we should enforce respect for our treaty-rights by insisting that every official shall be dismissed who is directly or indirectly responsible for their breach. Such action in Yunnan on the part of France has led to French trading rights being respected while ours are being utterly disregarded not only in that province but more or less in every province of China. Again, how is it that we allow regulations to be made for the steam-navigation of the inland waters of China, which practically nullify the boon secured by our Minister at Peking, which, if allowed its full effects, would have vastly increased both the internal and foreign trade of the country? Another point that should have been attended to is the insistence that our merchants, manufacturers, shopkeepers and their assistants—who are at present confined to the treaty-ports—shall be granted the same right of residence throughout the length and breadth of China as has been secured by treaty for the missionaries and their families, and that they should have the right of carrying on their business in any place that they may select. But whether this right can be obtained or not, our Government should not rest under the slur properly cast on them by the senior and junior members of the legislative council of our colony of Hong Kong, representing the Chinese, that our consular officials persistently refuse recognition and protection to British subjects descended from the Chinese who happen to be for commercial or social purposes in Chinese territory, although this policy was directly opposite to that of France, Russia, Germany, Portugal and the United States, who each and all afford the fullest measure of protection to their Chinese subjects in the open ports or the interior of China. Over and over again our Consuls have pointed out in their annual reports that British trade is being seriously crippled because the Chinese conveying British goods fear the consequences of the unjust levies and exactions of the tax-gatherers. The importance of protecting our own Chinese from such exactions can be gauged from the oft-repeated fact that at Hong Kong and Shanghai our goods pass out of our hands into those of the Chinese merchants. Nothing, therefore,

could be more foolish than for our Government to maintain their present policy of refusing protection to our fellow Chinese subjects.

AMERICAN COMMERCIAL PROSPERITY.

MR. LYMAN GAGE'S statement on the finances and commerce of the United States for the fiscal year ended 30 June last is not a document which will commend itself to the wisecracks of Cobdenism. Curiously enough its appearance synchronised with the publication by Messrs. Swan Sonnenschein of Mr. Sydney J. Chapman's Cobden prize essay on "The History of Trade between the United Kingdom and the United States with Especial Reference to the Effect of Tariffs." The book itself is of no importance, despite its long title and very important subject-matter; for, except in one or two isolated instances, the writer has wholly failed to show the effect of the various American tariffs. To the great panorama of industrial development, such as has been equalled in no other nation, which the trade history of the United States unfolds, Mr. Chapman is blind; and all he gives his readers is a confused succession of incomplete and mostly unrelated and badly arranged details. The sole intelligible purpose running through his dreary little volume is a desire to attack Protection, but as the North American Republic has made its marvellous industrial progress under the aegis of the stiffest Protectionist policy to be found anywhere in the world, the attempt is naturally a hopeless fiasco. Mr. Gage's statement answers Mr. Chapman, so far as there is anything in Mr. Chapman to answer, with such trenchant appositeness that the setting of the one against the other is an interesting and by no means an unprofitable task.

In his final pages Mr. Chapman blinks at, he certainly does not tackle, the awkward fact that American trade has made much more rapid progress than English trade. Let us take his own explanation of the phenomenon. "But America's population has grown considerably faster than ours recently. In the last fifty years their population increased about 130 per cent., whereas ours increased only about 36 per cent. If we draw curves of trade per head of population we shall find not only that our trade per head is enormously greater than theirs—in 1894 the latter was between £5 and £6, and the former was nearly £20—but also that it grew much faster from the time of the adoption of free trade until about 1870. From 1870 to 1880 America's foreign trade per head increased faster than that of the United Kingdom. After 1870 the former was steady, but the latter fell." Before giving an answering quotation from Mr. Gage, let us clear up one or two of the blunders in the above. The statement as to the exceeding greatness of England's trade in comparison with the United States is obviously arrived at by considering only the oversea trade of the respective countries and lumping together the exports and the imports. Now Mr. Chapman should be aware that the greater part of American trade—up to a few years ago the only part which seriously occupied the attention of American producers—was the huge home market of the United States; and that does not appear in Mr. Chapman's calculation at all: his comparison is therefore utterly vitiated. Then to include in the figures showing England's industrial prosperity the sums she spends on purchasing imported wares is again so misleading a performance as to make the comparison of no avail. Further, the statement that "from 1870 to 1880 America's foreign trade per head increased faster than that of the United Kingdom" is an unfortunate admission on Mr. Chapman's part. That period comprises the first real decade of United States Protection. In the earlier part of the century tariffs wavered between long periods of partial Free Trade and short periods of haphazard Protection. Protection was begun in scientific fashion in 1861; but the devastating civil war began at the same time, and no conclusions can be drawn from the few following years. The decade 1870-80 represented the years when the results of Protection should be apparent: Mr. Chapman unwittingly shows us that among those results was the rapid development of an export trade,

which, according to the cardinal principle of your Cobdenite, can only flourish under Free Trade. One more point. Population increases with increased trade: a healthy production of commodities results in a healthy production of human beings; and though the relative circumstances of England and the United States diminish the full force of the argument, it is fair to assume that the greater industrial progress of the United States is partly the cause as well as the effect of a greater ratio in the population increase. Finally, Mr. Chapman, with that blind disregard for kind in trade which is a distinguishing feature of the Free Trade Professor's mind, utterly ignores the growth of manufactures in the United States and the change which has come over the character of United States' exports. No longer do the United States send only raw materials for England to manufacture; they grow more raw materials than ever, but they work up many of those materials in their own factories and send them abroad to compete with British manufactures.

But now for Mr. Lyman Gage's reply to Mr. Chapman's attempted belittlement of American progress. He shows (it is not necessary to burden these columns with all the figures) that the exports from the United States in 1899 were 212 per cent. greater than in 1870, while the imports advanced 60 per cent. Then he works out the progress on the population basis, and shows that the population doubled itself between 1870 and 1899. This means that the United States imported goods to the value of \$11.30 per head in 1870, and only \$9.15 per head in 1899; on the other hand, the exports per head, which were only \$10.19 in 1870, had grown to \$16.12 in '99. The imports per head are 20 per cent. less than in 1870, the exports are 58 per cent. more. Then Mr. Gage dwelt on the quality of the foreign trade. Let us quote his own words. "In nearly all articles in the first-mentioned class—manufactured articles—there has been little increase during the thirty years under consideration, although the consuming population has doubled meantime, the increase of 60 per cent. in our importations during that time having been chiefly in articles for use in manufacturing and in food stuffs of a class which cannot be produced at home. In the largest items of manufactures imported—woollen goods and iron and steel—there has been a marked reduction, while in the other principal items of manufacture . . . the increase has been far below the increase of the population, and also below the average increase of 60 per cent. shown in the total importations of 1899 compared with 1870." This course of trade is very significant. Equally significant is the increase of fully manufactured articles in the United States' exports. When the returns were published certain of Mr. Chapman's school seized avidly, as drowning men catching at straws, on the fact that the total value of the United States' exports for the fiscal year 1899 was 4½ million dollars below the record of 1,231½ million dollars in the previous year. But the facts of the case give them no comfort. The difference was caused by the short European wheat crops and the high prices in 1898, which swelled the values of the United States' wheat exports in that year. In the fiscal year 1899 lower values reigned. But the exports of American manufactures in 1899 were larger than in the previous year by 48 million dollars. On the balance therefore the marvellous record of 1898 was actually and substantially surpassed by the record of 1899. With such facts as these before the public, we would urge Mr. Chapman and his friends for their own sakes to leave American trade alone. "Orthodox" economists may theorise but facts are entirely against them. Their arguments are sound within the limits fixed by themselves, but they abstract from so many of the factors in life that when acted upon their arguments come out wrong.

THE WAR FUND AND THE NATION'S DUTY.

THERE are several significant facts in regard to the allocation of the large sums that have been contributed to the various War Relief Funds. Evidently the chief object that arouses the sympathy of the public is the provision for the widows and orphans of the

soldiers killed; next the provision for reservists' wives and families; and thirdly the provision for the disabled. Much perplexity, it is true, has arisen from the laxity with which subscribers have allocated their donations; and as to the mode in which this duty should be performed for them by the managers of the funds. In the case of the Mansion House Fund their discretion has been limited by the rule under which subscriptions were asked for—that in case of non-allocation by the donor the subscription would be handed over for the benefit of widows and orphans. But here is an additional indication of the paramount importance in the public mind of the particular fund providing for the case of the soldier's death. A subscriber wishing to contribute does not take the trouble specifically to allocate his subscription because it goes automatically to what he considers the most important fund, and his intention is carried out without further trouble.

We see in such facts as these the nation's recognition of a duty to provide specially for the three objects we have mentioned, all of which are so closely connected as almost to be one object. This suggests the question should not the admitted moral obligation be clothed with legal force in a much greater degree than hitherto it has been. At present in the case of a soldier killed in action or dying of a wound within twelve months after being wounded, the widow receives a gratuity of one year's pay with a certain addition in respect of children. We do not go into particulars, as we desire only to point out that while to a certain extent an obligation is in this case admitted it is very limited: it is small pecuniarily, and it only applies to the class of married soldiers. In the case of reservists a separation allowance similar to that allowed to the wives of soldiers serving with the colours may be made upon mobilisation. For partial or complete disablement upon service, pensions are granted which are generally quite inadequate to support the pensioners without aid from charity. There are of course the long-service pensions, but we are not concerned with them at present. The pensions and allowances of the Patriotic Fund, and other funds such as that known as Colonel Gildea's, are charitable and not legal provisions. How stunted these legal provisions are, the fine efforts made by private charity to raise the Transvaal War Relief funds, and thus to cover the deficiency, are eloquent testimony.

The two cases where the State should assume a wider obligation are those of soldiers who lose their lives in the service, and soldiers who are disabled and so lose the power to earn their living. We might put this on the ground that the State ought to provide adequately for those who are killed or injured in its service, that it ought to be animated by something of the sentiment which has inspired the public in offering its tribute to our soldiers and sailors. But self-interest points the State to the same conclusion; it is necessary to the Army itself as a fighting machine. It is necessary in order to obtain a sufficient number of men, and in order that those men may be mentally and physically of a high class. Such a type of man wants to know whether in becoming a soldier he will not be running great risks of rendering himself useless as a civilian. The subject of a career in the army is a wide one. His chances of that will be present to his mind; but at any rate the vigorous and capable young artisan will ask himself very seriously what will happen to him if he receives such injuries while he is serving as to be incapacitated from earning his living at his own trade for the remainder of his life. We are afraid that in most cases he will have to relinquish with regret his natural taste for soldiering and fighting, because he dislikes the prospect of becoming a semi-pauper. Also, he will want to know what provision will be made in the event of death for those who are dependent upon him. He is entering a dangerous trade and he is not, as workmen in dangerous trades mostly are, compensated by a higher rate of wage; nor will the pay he receives enable him to make provision either for himself or family by accident or life assurance. If he lets his soldiering instincts prevail over his prudence it may be that he will fight not a whit less bravely when the cue is to fight, but it is not an unknown experience that men when they are about to face possible

death face it all the more cheerfully if their pecuniary affairs are in good order, and they are not haunted by the dread of what may happen to those whom they love and who are dependent on them. The duty of the State seems to be to consider the whole subject of providing an ample pension system for its soldiers at a time when the public have before it the fact that it is only by charity that the deficiency is supplied. Either by some insurance scheme of its own or by the ordinary method of insurance in accident and life assurance societies, the State should place the soldier who suffers disablement or death in its service in the same legal position as the ordinary insurer against accident or death. The mode of insurance and the amount of the policies are precisely the matters which would be disputable; but whatever the amount of his policy might be the soldier would have the legal right to recover it or, in the case of a policy payable on death, to dispose of it by will, or to leave it upon intestacy to become part of his estate going to his family in the usual course of law. Consider the proportion of peace time to war time and the proportion of soldiers killed or disabled to the whole number in active service, and it is reasonable to expect that actuarial calculation would show that no high premium would be necessary to secure a sum large enough to provide a working man's competency. It might be that in considering the mode of securing these rights to the soldier the question of the application of the charitable funds already in existence, both the older and the more recent, should be reviewed. No legal provision would be so ample as to exhaust the claims the soldier has upon his countrymen; there would still be room for that benevolence, whose vocation so many of our good people fear to jeopardise even by the extinction of the very ills benevolence is meant to meet.

THE HOUSE OF COMMONS PAST AND PRESENT.

WHEN an eminent ex-member of Parliament like Sir Richard Temple* and an experienced lobbyist like Mr. Lucy arrive at the same conclusion about modern Parliaments, we need have little doubt about accepting it as true. The proposition which these authorities agree in affirming is the apparent paradox that the extension of the suffrage has not democratised the House of Commons. We call this an apparent paradox because each time it has been proposed to lower the franchise it has been confidently asserted that the effect would be to return a different and lower class of men to the House of Commons, who would inevitably introduce an inferior standard of manners, and demoralise the tone of debate. Experience has falsified these predictions, which indeed were based upon an imperfect acquaintance with human nature. It was assumed by these prophets of evil that the lower the class of voter the lower the stamp of man he would choose as his representative; in other words, that working-men would prefer to draw their members from their own class rather than from the classes above them. The exact contrary is the truth, for working-men are both jealous and suspicious of men of their own order who aspire to parliamentary honours. This distrust is in no way discreditable, for the industrial voters know perfectly well that an artisan who becomes a member of Parliament ceases to be a working-man without becoming a gentleman, using the term in the sense of one equipped with the knowledge and judgment necessary to make an efficient legislator. Exceptions to this rule there have been, for in the last twenty years we have seen working-men returned to the House of Commons and paid by their constituents who have very adequately represented their special interest and have commanded the respect of all parties. But the working-men who have succeeded in Parliament are few and far between. In the House of Commons which was elected in 1885, just after the last extension of the franchise, there were several working-men members, not

of a very desirable kind. Some of them were not returned again in 1886, and the others sank into insignificance or disappeared at a later stage. Another fact overlooked by those who feared that the democracy would democratise the House of Commons is the enormous strength of tradition in that assembly, and the irresistible power it possesses of moulding new comers to its conventional forms. Nowhere is the demagogue so harmless as on the floor of the House of Commons. If he is clever, like Mr. Bradlaugh, he catches the tone of the House and becomes courteous and genial, in which case he is certain to be popular, even if he is not powerful. But if he is stupid, and tries to Trafalgar-Square the House, he is soon reduced to a ridiculous and apologetic individual, whose threats are drowned in a buzz of conversation.

Putting aside the Irish Nationalists, who waged open war upon the Constitution, the most insolent demagogue who ever sat in the House of Commons was Cobbett, and he was returned in days long anterior to the new democracy. It would be quite improper to apply the term demagogue to men of the genius and culture of Bright and Cobden, though they lived by agitation. The working-men in the constituencies are very quick to see that a mere "tub-thumper" is no good at Westminster, and aristocratic candidates have always been and still are the best to run for the large towns. Sir Richard Temple dwells repeatedly upon the advantage of birth for an aspirant to parliamentary success. The abolition of the House of Lords, if it were possible, which it is not, would make the House of Commons the most aristocratic legislature in the world. The present House of Commons contains probably a larger percentage of young men of the upper class than any parliament of the reign. It follows that the manners of such an assembly are decorous, even to dullness. Lord Rosebery complained a little at Epsom of the diminution of interest in the doings of the Commons, which he attributed partially to the rival claims of the new local bodies. But it is not that: people care what the County and District Councils do, but nobody cares a button what they say. It is the war which absorbs all our interest now, and is likely to absorb it for some time to come. The other cause, to which Lord Rosebery alluded, is the disappearance from the House of Commons of interesting personalities. Lord Rosebery testified to the effect produced by the translation of Lord Beaconsfield to "another place," and subsequently by the retirement of Mr. Gladstone. The breakdown of Lord Randolph Churchill's health subtracted another figure, which had a great fascination for everyone. These are gaps which it may take many years to fill; which certainly are unfilled at present. Mr. Balfour would be still more interesting to the House of Commons if he could conceal the fact that the House of Commons is not very interesting to him. Mr. Chamberlain will always be more interesting to the man in the street than to the majority of his brother members, from whom he differs so widely in training and tastes. On the Opposition bench it is no offence to say that Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey are the only statesmen whose career excites curiosity or enthusiasm. We seem to be in for a period like that which followed the deaths of Pitt and Fox at the beginning of the century, described by Disraeli as the reign of the arch-mediocrities. But dullness is safe, and decorum is an excellent thing. A rate-supported circus would be less dangerous and costly than a House of Commons, which came to be regarded as a place of amusement.

LITERARY INFANTS' FOOD.

A CRITIC whom we and the world know well has written prettily and wittily of the nineteenth century—the century of science and progress—"vanishing in a cloud of pinafiores." "More than half a century has passed since the enthusiastic and inspiring word of Froebel" (we are quoting now from "Child Life" the organ of the Froebelian Society) "'Come, let us live for our children' resounded in the green Thuringian mountains," and since then a vast and increasing volume of nonsense, overwhelming a trickle of sense, has been poured out concerning the young

* The House of Commons. By Sir Richard Temple, Bart., G.C.S.I. London: John Long. 1899.

idea and our duty to it. Tommy is to be emancipated from "dominus" and dominie, from *τύπτω* and the stick, and to replace them there is recommended a régime of love, supplemented by poetry and the natural sciences. What may be the value of such scientific knowledge as is obtained by learning to hop like a frog or to play at being dandelion seeds, scientists may decide; we have only to speak here of the uses of literature as recommended by Froebelians for the infant mind and for those older persons who are endeavouring to become worthy to inform it. Perhaps we should say Herbartians for it is, it appears, the Herbartian who "chooses the fairy tale as concentration material for children of six to seven." "The most important work of literature" we learn again from "Child Life," "is to convey moral notions" and consequently it is not every fairy tale that will do. "Why tell such a story as 'The Wolf and the Seven Little Goats'—hiding the true moral of obedience to parents under the false idea that the man in the street or the foreigner is naturally an enemy?" Well, Mr. Laurence Housman has got over the difficulty and emphasised the true moral—undoubtedly children like to have a moral—in the delightful refrain of his delightful version of this story to which Mrs. Dearmer has added equally delightful pictures:—

"Only remember whatever you do
Not to be clever and think it's you;
But intellect smother and stick to your mother,
And somehow or other she'll pull you through."

But does Mr. Housman or anyone else except a Froebelian believe that the moral does anything except satisfy a child's rudimentary sense of artistic completeness? Was a fractious little boy ever induced to eat his soup by the awful example of chubby Augustus? The "Struwwelpeter," best of all children's books, would be condemned at once by your modern theorist. "Are we not in danger of undermining children's trust in parents and guardians by suggesting the possibility of anything but love?" And undoubtedly tall Agrippa and the dreadful scissorman suggest something quite different: they suggest swift and inevitable retribution such as in one shape or another Master Tommy will find existing when he goes to a school that is not Froebelian, as let us hope he will do. As a matter of fact children are not generally frightened by images of terror in stories; the liking for tragedy is just as primitive as the love of farce or romance. Somebody in "Child Life" had related the legend of Deirdre and the Fate of the Sons of Usnach as a fine example of story-telling—which it is—and promptly there comes a protest in the next number against "cruel and ugly stories." We suppose that the killing of the suitors in the hall at Ithaca is a cruel and ugly story but we pity the imagination that is not stirred by it.

Only—and here we come to a second point—stories should not be boiled down. It is not easy to feel the least enthusiasm even for Charles and Mary Lamb's "Tales from Shakespeare," how much less for a modernised prose extract from Malory. Why put into prose—and frigid artificial prose—the story of Sir Bedivere which Tennyson has told so magnificently in verse? Children love verse and remember it easily long before they grasp the meaning of half the words. The tale swims before their minds misty and romantic, and ignorance of the tongue throws a halo even about Macaulay's Lays. We are not prepared to swear that boys would care for the "Morte d'Arthur," as they do care for "The Revenge;" but there is no doubt that they would be more likely to care for it in Tennyson's verse than in anyone else's prose. But these industrious people are so busy grubbing for a moral or an inner meaning in literature that they are entirely blind to the beauty. Most poems and among them the best no more suggest a moral than a beefsteak; the poem and the beefsteak are good things to be enjoyed and you will be the better for enjoying them but not because of their ethical significance. For instance the story of Deirdre is an ancient and beautiful story telling the tragedy of love cut short and valour overmatched; the wise editor of "Child Life" justifies his recommendation of it by declaring that it paints in strong colours the misery

that comes of deceit. Deirdre, it is true, elopes with Naisi and if she had stayed at home and married the king, her tragedy could never have happened, but the last thing in the bard's mind was to reprobate Deirdre's conduct. To read any moral into an epic is unwise in spite of Horace's platitudes about the ethical lessons to be derived from Homer; to read the wrong moral is criminal. With a poet of Tennyson's cast the thing is more permissible; yet for an example of the spirit in which not to study literature it would be hard to better this—"Cenone"—Observe the allegory. A warning against the temptation of power and of sensuality, showing that wisdom is the thing to be desired—"Observe"! as if Tennyson did not cram the too obvious moral down our throats. The poetry of the poem lies outside these considerations, which are only suited to the intelligence of desperately daring ladies who in provincial Shakespeare societies read papers on the religious convictions of Mark Antony or the ethical basis of Jessica's elopement. "Our poets pour us wine" as Mrs. Browning very justly observed; then why in heaven's name try to convert their vintage into a temperance drink? From first to last—from the fairy tale to the epic, the idyll, or the tragedy—let us have the thing as it was at first created for man's use—the fruit, the beefsteak, but not the Nestlé's food. Nestlé's food may be very good for infants, but it is surprising how soon the human animal begins to prefer meat. All the issues of life may figure rightly in the fairy tale though in shadows; pity and terror have a right to their place there as in the world; and, leaving the nursery, the adolescent mind even of kindergarten teachers ought surely to be encouraged to take its poetry in something like the spirit of a poet.

"LES BOÈRES."—II.

THE pavements of Paris are growing clear; no one idles at corners, no one brings out his chair. Doorsteps are less occupied; balconies are bleak, you can pass without being subjected to close inspection. Children may not draw chalk designs on the curbstone; friendly chats and occasional quarrels now take place indoors: that amiable open-air life, beloved by Paris, is over until the spring. The coco-man has vanished. His stall, like that of the motherly soul who traded in sickly lemonade and suspicious ices, has given place to the chestnut merchant's furnace. It glows at almost every corner, it is patronised perpetually, it is a source of considerable revenue to its owner. Parisians pass, condemning the cold. They wear mufflers, and thick gloves. They have dew on their beards, and their eyes water. They tell one another that they can see their breath: the "phénomène" surprises them, it is "épatant," "bizarre." And they absorb peppermints, and order grog américain—not on a terrace, however, but in the corner of some warm café far from the door. There, they feel a draught, ask the waiter to seek its origin and to stifle it at once and for all. There, they play picquet, écarté or dominoes. There, they discuss the Government, the High Court and—"les Boères".... "Of all wars," says a brisk little bourgeois, "this is the most énérvante. One knows nothing, absolutely nothing. One would like more news, more incident. Voyons! What is the position? The Boères are for ever marching and the English for ever retreating. It was not so in 'seventy; it has never been so in French wars. It will last for years, until our children are fathers, and then both the Boères and the English will claim victory." His three companions, no less bourgeois, no less brisk, agree—then call up the waiter and declare that if the old draught has been stifled a new one has taken its place. "Impossible," replies the waiter, and all four raise their voices, and protest that this draught is even more piercing than the first, that it whistles, that it cuts, that it can almost be heard and that, unless it is checked, it will certainly blow them away. The waiter says that the draught shall be seen to, but that "it will be difficult." In the meanwhile would these gentlemen like the last edition of the "Patrie" and the "Petit Bleu" which have just come in? They would, and they would also like to

feel the last of that "sacré" draught. So the papers come, and the waiter goes off in search of the wind that pierces, whistles, cuts, can almost be heard and is about to blow four full-grown men away. The "Patrie" has portraits of the "Boères," and articles on the "threats" of England and on the mobilisation of the English fleet. The "Petit Bleu" is illustrated with pictures of the wounded, dying and dead. "Millevoys," says one of the four, "does more harm to commerce than even Drumont. He knows as well as we that England will not declare war on the strength of a few caricatures. He should be shut up in a maison de santé." A camelot's cry is heard, it is hoarse and it is excited. All four gossipers rise, then sit down again declaring that "it is probably a canard." Other consommateurs have sent for a copy of the camelot's paper, and are handed the "Liberté." They open it hastily. They examine it anxiously. They say, at last, that Ladysmith has fallen: a telegram from Holland says so. "This," remarks someone, "is the tenth telegram of the same kind. Ladysmith has fallen ten times. To-morrow another telegram will come, then Ladysmith will have fallen eleven times. Next day we shall hear that Ladysmith can hold out for three months; but during those three months ninety telegrams will come and Ladysmith will have fallen over a hundred times." "La prise de Ladysmith," shouts another camelot. "Ladysmith has fallen," says an Englishman. "Then," replies his friend with an American accent, "you owe me ten dollars." The waiter has something to say about the war. He has a sharp and humorous face. His eye twinkles. He is amused. "Wars of this kind," he declares, "benefit the newspapers. They can say what they like, for the Boères live thousands of miles away and the telegraph lines have been cut. Les rédacteurs gather together and decide that Ladysmith must fall. And so they scribble quickly, and send for the camelots and tell them to shout and—." The first draught, or the second draught or a new draught is playing about the four full-grown bourgeois, and so they have summoned the waiter. Does he wish them to lie in bed for weeks with influenza? bronchitis? pneumonia? See, they shiver. See again, they must put their coat-collars up. It is disgraceful, it is unheard of: here, in the largest café on the boulevards, draughts may pierce, whistle, cut, almost be heard, nearly blow one away, and give one influenza, bronchitis or pneumonia while the waiters stand by idly and talk. Which draught is it? They do not know, and they do not care, but it is a hundred times sharper than the second and a thousand times more dangerous than the first. One would do better to stay at home. One would be obliged to forego apéritifs. One would be safer in the Transvaal, among the "Boères." The waiter "regrets." He will go off this moment and look for the draught, but "it will be difficult." He, himself, knows what it is to have a current of air playing on "one's" neck and spine, for at night he often sees his bed-curtains flutter, and must rise and stop up cracks, and examine corners and lay paper beneath the door. But—que voulez-vous? Paris always had draughts, and always will. So he goes off to find the draught, after declaring again that "it will be difficult," and looks under tables and shakes his napkin and, when the four bourgeois are engaged in talking, steals slyly out on to the terrace where a camelot stands. "What luck?" he asks. "Sold out," replies the camelot. "Vive Ladysmith! Vive les Boères!"

Not only the bourgeoisie, however, discusses the "Boères" and the war. Gamins are interested in the topic: they form the camp of the English and the camp of the "Boères," they fight, they charge, they retreat. Passing Englishmen attract their attention. They pity them, or they denounce them, often they say: "Il n'a pas l'air bien heureux, celui-là." Cabmen are sick of the subject. From their boxes they hail the camelots with "voleur" or "farceur." Why should there be so much commotion about the "Boères"? Who are the "Boères"? They have never seen, never driven, a "Boère." Nor are the camelots, themselves, too fond of the campaign that brings them in so many sous. They are hoarse; some

can scarcely speak; they have advertised the "Boères," and proclaimed the fall of Ladysmith, too often. Barbers, however, are eloquent on the subject; all entertain their clients with criticisms of President Kruger and Mr. Chamberlain. One, a generous, broad, open-minded fellow does not approve of the harsh epithets applied so frequently and so freely to England. She is greedy, he thinks. She should not covet the whole world. She should think of others but herself. In short, she should be "reasonable." There are bad people in France, too. Of course there must be good people in England, but—they should be "reasonable." Let them consider a little, for everyone should be thoughtful. Again, he protests that he does not dislike the English, they are regular clients and they pay well. But although he has never shaved them, never shampooed them, he cannot help sympathising with the "Boères."

THE OLD WATER-COLOUR SOCIETY.

IF pictures acted upon one another with an explosive force proportionate to their vitality Mr. Napier Hemy's sea-pieces at the Old Water-Colour Society's exhibition would send the rest of the pictures flying in a scarcely appreciable whiff. I do not mean in the least that they look explosive, others are much louder-looking; I mean that Mr. Hemy is strikingly competent to do what all the rest pretend, namely to model a world in water-colour obedient to the laws of light.

This, rightly or wrongly, is what these gentlemen and ladies set out to do. They are not content with the older kind of water-colour drawing that makes no such pretence, the drawing in abstract pencil line, washed over with a few abstract tints. They profess to build up a solid world as they have seen it built up in oil pictures, a world where the shape and place of objects are explained by their illumination. This enterprise, carried out in the subjects chosen, demands almost superhuman powers, not only precision of eye to note the true shape tone and colour of each trait in the thing, but knowledge of how a treacherous medium will behave when these observations are translated into pigment, and also the control of nerve and the resource necessary to apply that knowledge instantaneously.

The genius of a succession of great men reaching a climax of emulation has made of the art of oil-painting a task almost too difficult to take up again; fully developed, its responsibilities have become so complex that it is no longer a ready means of expression. The masters weigh upon the modern, and he lies like a sick sparrow gazing at the sky and withholding his twitter. But our water-colourists, doubling the difficulties of the task, are under the impression that they accomplish it. When a man who has a conception of what the task is, and as by fire wins through with a report of the behaviour of the world under light, when an unusually gifted painter like Mr. Brabazon for example, casting all else to the wolves that would snatch his effect, carries that treasure safely home, the old water-colourist tells us. Now I should have put in a great deal more. Dear good man!

The task is easy for those who are perfectly innocent. If a man has never noticed that an object looks different when set up against the light from what it does when facing the light, if local colour remains the same to his eyes whatever the illumination, he does not of course know that there is any difficulty, except those of mechanism. When Mr. Tom Lloyd, to take one among many, paints groups of people against a yellow sunset, his tones are almost as arbitrary as if he were to colour his sky black and his people's faces light green. His perception goes no further than of vaguely apprehended local tint, faces are a reddish tint, the sky a yellowish tint in no way measured one against the other, yet his water-colour affects to be based on a convention that includes tone as well as tint. That is the general character of the elaborate British water-colour. Objects are made out in a kind of slop-work modelling on a radically false basis; a vast pretence of realism is there, but how raw and untrained must be the eye on which it imposes!

A test which may be usefully applied to the pretence of the water-colourists is to go round the gallery and

examine the skies. How many of these painters dare pretend to model a cloud? A cloud is a much simpler object to model than most of those that they affect to model, but from its very simplicity it betrays failure more readily. Where everything is so vague in the structure of ground, foliage and the rest, failure to model one thing successfully may be read as success in modelling some other form, hence a huge activity in cutting up the ground and the trees that imposes on a casual observer. But the hesitation to draw clouds, and *a fortiori* to draw faces, exposes not only the immense difficulty of doing the thing at all in water-colour, but also the quality of the work in parts of the picture not so immediately self-confuting. Mr. David Murray is one of the few who face the test; he backs his effect with some ugly work in dry colour, and the whole comes out a little hard and cold, but there it is, the work of a craftsman who has the skill and courage of his tools, and applies them with great exactness to a thing seen. One or two others are like workmen who have not the courage of their tools but do apply themselves after a fashion to a thing seen, much as a carver with a figure in his head, but uncertain with the chisel, might arrive at scrubbing it out of the wood with sand-paper. Mr. Matthew Hale is at the head of these, and others who work in a restricted muffle with artistic intention are Miss Montalba and Miss Rose Barton. Messrs. Robert Allen, Robert Little and James Paterson use their tools more directly and with a sense of tone, yet the aspect of the world they arrive at is so brown and blue that I cannot but think a more arbitrary, less anxious, tinting would serve them better.

These men have a pictorial idea, and a divided allegiance between cleverness of execution and truth of aspect. In Mr. Melville we have a pictorial idea and cleverness of execution very nearly divorced from truth of aspect. A master of all the processes of water-colour, he is determined to have clear brilliant painting and will not venture an inch into drawing that will endanger this. He has therefore arrived at a system in which forms are reduced to coloured wafers with here and there a little modelling to persuade the eye itself to model the rest. With all his skill of organisation I think Mr. Melville's scheme cracks too visibly on the large scale of the "Bull-fight." But as a feat in dodging and amusing the eye to the utmost on a thin pretence of realism it is remarkable.

I have run through the more respectable performers in the gallery to return with added emphasis to Mr. Hemy. While they come to some kind of terms with the nearly impossible he does it, and I take off my hat to him. He constructs the plain of the sea under the action of wind and light, does it in water-colour large in scale, full in tone, precise in touch. He has learned the sea as no one else in the gallery has learned his subject, and sketches out its perspective with more certainty than many of them could a flat pavement. The forms reveal themselves in the values of the transparent depths of the waves or their reflecting surfaces, and the sky we see, the sky we see reflected, and the variable floor of water from purple-blue to green all hang together, one creature. For precision of detail note in his principal piece the foaming top of the wake driven from the bows of the fishing-boat and crossing the lines of the waves. In all this Mr. Hemy uses the full resources of water-colour, as he must, both transparent and opaque; he uses them with complete judgment, there is no messing. The only doubtful feature in his practice is the scraping of a dry brush over parts of the sea to give variety; a man who can express himself so exactly need not employ process. If water-colour does well in emulating oil-painting, here is a man with the knowledge and skill demanded.

Mr. Napier Hemy, then, far outranks his comrades in his competence to render what he professes to render; where are we to place him as an artist? He has a curious limitation, shared with some other painters of the sea, like Mr. Hook, in that he loses his virtue when he turns from the waves to rocks, fishing-boats, human beings. These remain outside of the silver world, brown, unrefined, and often make one dissatisfied with his picture-making. But in the water-colour I have

been speaking of, the centre piece of the wall on the left as one enters the gallery, the fishing-boat is well placed and, proportioned to the mass of the sea, relieves it and gives it value. Mr. Napier Hemy has, I should judge, the right to a place in a gallery of Constables.

No individual painter in the current exhibitions of the other societies struck me so much. The stronger landscape men at the Society of Oil Painters, Messrs. Peppercorn, Leslie Thomson, Hill, Aumonier probably reserve themselves for their own show later on. Mr. Byam Shaw has attracted some notice by his morality directed against the use of rouge. I do not understand the objection, coming from him; from his manner of representing colour one would think that no natural red either in cheeks or roses would be to his taste, no added red too strong. Mr. Cayley Robinson, at the British Artists, makes one pause a little longer over his version of praphaelism; fixed reverie of expression, intense inspection of plain material, and a certain research of light on a tin-like basis. D. S. M.

"CHILDREN OF THE GHETTO."

YOU know what happens when a well-known writer of books takes the oath and his seat in the House of Commons. The air is charged at once with deferential welcome of one who cannot fail to be an ornament to the Chamber, and with a quiet, stolid conviction that he will (and determination that he shall) be one of the most ineffectual bores in the House. It is even so when the well-known writer of books makes his *début* in the theatre. Let anyone who goes to the first night watch the dramatic critics. In their ingenuous faces he will be able to read, even before the curtain rises, every word they will scribble when the play is over. "Mr. — has made for himself an unique place among contemporary novelists, and it is not too much to say that, as such, he appeals to as wide a public as any" &c. &c. "At the same time it must be borne in mind that the qualities which command success in the sphere of drama are not necessarily those which" &c. &c.

Well! there is, sometimes, something to be said for this attitude. A man endowed with real literary talent is as unlikely to acquire a talent for the tricks of the theatre as he is to acquire a House of Commons manner. Also—a more important point—he is as unlikely to possess an instinct for dramaturgy (a different thing from playing the tricks of the theatre) as he is to possess an instinct for politics or statecraft. The chances are that if he honestly try to write good plays he will be as ineffectual as Bulwer Lytton was in the House, or as Sir George Trevelyan, if he try to please the public at the expense of himself. There have been, I admit, men who could write both good plays and good books. But such cases are rare exceptions. Thus, on the whole, the dramatic critics are justified in anticipating failure for the true man of letters. Where I differ from them is in their sulkily mistrust of a man merely because he is a successful author. Mr. Zangwill is a successful author, but this fact was not nearly enough to make me assume that he could not write a good play. The evidence I accumulated last Monday at the Adelphi all goes to prove that he cannot write a good play. But there was not, I suggest, any *prima facie* case against him. Mr. Zangwill, despite his many books and many editions, has not, really, any claim to be regarded as a man of letters. Certainly, he has an intellect, and a personality, and a point of view. But all the books of his which I have tried to read have merely proved to me that literature is not the form through which he ought to express himself. Let me explain. There is all the difference in the world between writing and being a writer; though the inclusion of writing with reading and arithmetic in our schools' curriculum has induced a general delusion that anyone can be a writer. People think that anyone who has something to say and writes it on paper is a writer. He is not necessarily so. Writing is a means of expression, certainly; but so are painting, musical composition, dramaturgy. And the true writer must have a specific innate gift for writing, as has the painter for painting, the—my readers will save me

the trouble of completing the sentence. Be not afraid! I am not talking about "style," though that is what I myself care most about. A man may be unable to find the exact words for his meaning, or, finding them, may be unable to arrange them harmoniously, and yet may possess a specific gift for literature. Not even the haters of Mr. Kipling's work—and I belong to that "acute and upright minority"—deny that Mr. Kipling is a writer, a man predestined by nature to express himself in writing, a man whose soul is in his books and could not otherwise be revealed to us. Nothing irritates me more than the lately-renewed cant that literature is merely what is written by noble thinkers. Granted, that great books can only be written by great men; but emphatically denied, that you need only be a great man to write great books. You may be a very great man, full of the noblest and most penetrating thoughts, full of imagination, wit and what not, and yet be utterly incapable of writing. Let us, for the sake of argument, admit that Mr. Gladstone was a very great man. If his fame were to depend on his writings, would he not have been long forgotten as a most tedious mediocrity? And again, are there not many quite little men, like Horace and Charles Lamb, whose writings are immortal? Horace and Charles Lamb happened to have pleasant little natures, plus a gift for writing. Mr. Gladstone had no such gift. Mr. Zangwill has proved in his writings that he himself has no such gift. I am not, as you may suspect, unfair to him. I am not judging him by the coarse humours he evolved under the influence of Mr. Jerome K. Jerome. I am judging him by his later *causeries*, and by his studies in Jewish life—"Dreamers of the Ghetto" and other books. Here, surely, was a man striving, plodding, floundering in a medium he never was meant for. Here was a man with ideas which, when he tried to wing them with live words, he did but bury under piles of dead words, leaving us to disinter them if we could. Here was a man with an interesting and new subject-matter, which, for all his knowledge of it, and for all his love of it, he succeeded in making tedious. "Dreamers of the Ghetto" was worth reading, though it was a bore. Many blue-books are worth reading. They are suggestive, instructive, if one is strong enough not to mind being bored by them. But the compilers of them are not literary men. Nor is he who compiled those books about the Ghetto a literary man. Had I accepted him as one, I should have expected his play to be bad—so widely different are literature and drama. As it was, I thought that possibly he might have found in dramaturgy a medium through which he could express himself well, and could make, at last, good use of his admirable subject-matter—

"This life that links us with the purple past
Of Babylon and Egypt, all the vast
Enchantment of the ancient Orient,
And yet with London and New York is blent."

My readers must excuse me for quoting these lines from the prologue—Mr. Zangwill's verse is, if anything, rather better than his prose. At any rate, these lines show one how alive Mr. Zangwill is to the fascination of his theme. If he had written a play about something in which he took but slight interest, then the badness of his play would not have been positive proof that he could not write a good play. But the badness of "Children of the Ghetto" moves me to advise him not to attempt other plays. I am sorry he cannot express himself through drama any more than he can through fiction. He might turn his hand to painting, or he might give a series of public lectures, or he might compose an opera. I urge him to leave no mode of expression untried, for my belief in him makes me really sorry that he should continue to be inarticulate. But in dramaturgy he can only waste his time. I do not say this because he has no sense of construction, the whole of his first act being occupied with a little incident which ought to have been merely explained by one of the characters, in a very few words, as having previously occurred. Sense of construction may be acquired. It is because Mr. Zangwill has no power of making his puppets live that I advise him to leave dramaturgy alone.

When the conflicts come—a conflict between a young man and the old man whose daughter he loves, a conflict between the young man and the girl—one does not care twopence about them because none of the conflicting characters has drawn one breath of life or contains one drop of blood. The young man, we know, is a millionaire and a lax Jew; the old man is a strict Rabbi; the girl accepts the hand of the young man. But that is all we know about them. Never for one moment does Mr. Zangwill make them live. They are not more human than the A, B and C at the corners of a triangle in Euclid. "Why," soliloquises the girl, forced to choose between her lover on one hand, her faith and her father on the other, "why is this terrible alternative forced on me?" That is Mr. Zangwill's notion of a heart-cry, and it is typical of all the writing in the play. Mr. Zangwill, knowing that it is the kind of thing dramatists are expected to do, devises a "terrible alternative" for the chief character; but he cannot make the chief character express such emotion as is produced by "terrible alternatives" in real life. He can make her see (what he sees) that she is in a dramatic position; but there his power ends; and, unfortunately, it is there that a dramatist's power begins. Many men can propound problems, contrive situations, manufacture puppets. But to live in the puppets, and so make them live for us, and so, too, make real for us the situations they appear in and the problems they illustrate—that is the test of the dramatist.

"El Capitan" did not fill me with a desire to see strenuous Mr. De Wolf Hopper again. Perhaps it was for this reason that the manager of the Comedy Theatre, having invited me to the first night of "The Mystical Miss," placed me behind a column, through which Mr. Hopper was invisible. The better way would have been not to invite me at all. There are many places in which one cannot see Mr. Hopper more comfortable than the little house in Panton Street, and I went to one of them soon after the curtain had risen.

MAX.

MR. NEWMAN AND THE QUEEN'S HALL BAND.

THE later public history of Mr. Robert Newman is the history of the recent stupendous improvement in orchestral playing in this country, and of the largely increased number of orchestral concerts; and if we would know how these things have come about—why orchestral concerts have become so much more frequent, why the standard of orchestral execution has gone up—we have to look at the later public history of Mr. Robert Newman. This can easily be seen to be no exaggerated statement. Let us consider the amount of orchestral playing one could hear so short a time as ten years ago. There were the Richter concerts—sometimes as many as nine in the year; there were the Philharmonic concerts—from which, were they many or few, all true musicians prayed fervently to be delivered; there were Mr. Henschel's concerts—which were only one degree better than the Philharmonic. Then during August, when everyone worth considering was away, there were Promenade Concerts at Covent Garden. They were run by a deceased estimable publican, who sold vast quantities of his liquor there; there was, once a week I believe, a "classical night;" and classical nights and other nights made the name of Promenade Concert a byword. For weeks, even for months, at a time, one could not hear a symphony or a Wagner selection (and this at a time when Wagner was little known and his later works were not given on the stage). The critics raised their voices in joint lamentation; but no one paid any attention until Queen's Hall was built, and Mr. Newman started out on his new enterprise. That enterprise included the formation of a good permanent orchestra, a good chorus, the finding of a good conductor, and the giving of orchestral concerts of the very first rank. He has succeeded, succeeded so well that occasionally I gird at him for giving too many good concerts, or at least for playing too much Wagner at them. It is only the natural ill-conditionedness of a musical critic that makes me say

these things. Not unless Mr. Newman goes persistently wrong for several years will anyone have the faintest right to say these things. He has done so much both for the sluggish and ungrateful public and for those born grumblers, the critics, that he ought to be trusted as long as possible. But this is a digression. What I want to point out now is what we owe to Mr. Newman. He has given us a conductor of the first rank, an orchestra of the first rank, and a never-ending series of very excellent concerts. It is he, more than the growlings of the press or a long-deferred judgment of the general public, that has dislodged the Philharmonic from the proud position it once held, and still holds in the imaginations of its directors. The very best conducting, once a rarity in these climes, is now as much an everyday matter as it is in the most musical towns in Germany; and the advantage the Philharmonic once had—that of never being closely compared with better orchestras under better conductors—is taken away. We hear Mr. Wood one day, the Philharmonic the next, and our verdict is instantaneous, decisive, final. Still, to have discredited the Philharmonic is, after all, only a kind of negative honour; and the two concerts—kind of benefit concerts—given Mr. Newman by his orchestra on Wednesday and, so far as one could judge, handsomely supported by the public, were rather a recognition of the positive services “he has rendered to music.” I was glad they were given, and glad to show by attending them that I also recognised Mr. Newman's services to music. Had Mr. Newman been principal of a music school, or organist of a large church, and done half as much for music, he would have been made a duke at least before now. Being merely an entrepreneur, he is supposed to “make money” out of his various enterprises (as if music-school principals and organists did not), and is asked to consider himself sufficiently thanked if the London County Council does not prosecute him for giving concerts on a Sunday. However, the public evidently appreciates him, and I appreciate him, so perhaps he will not worry much about the L.C.C.'s lack of appreciation.

The afternoon concert of Wednesday was rather popular in character. That is, the programme contained the Tchaikowsky Pathetic symphony, Mozart's “Zauberflöte” overture, Beethoven's “Coriolanus” overture, the Ride of the Valkyries (not “The Bride,” as one of last Sunday's papers called it), arrangements for orchestra of two of Mendelssohn's Songs without Words, and Tchaikowsky's “Casse Noisette” suite. The playing showed both the good and the bad results of Mr. Newman's and Mr. Wood's labours. The “Coriolanus” came off finely, with the most stupendous energy and the greatest tenderness in alternation. The “Casse Noisette” suite was given daintily. So much of the Ride of the Valkyries as I heard was wild, stormy, passionate. But the Pathetic symphony never showed enough of delicacy and feeling, even of ordinary care; there was an abundance of carelessly, sloppily played passages; the men did not respond to Mr. Wood's appeals for carefully graduated crescendos and diminuendos, and the climaxes were forced and lacked conviction, lacked the quality of inevitability. The truth is that though I call myself a grumbler for objecting to the Queen's Hall programmes, my objections are in every way reasonable so far as the Pathetic symphony is concerned. It has been played too often—so many times too often that not only is a large portion of the public wearying of it, but the band also is wearying of it, and learning to play it in a quite perfunctory manner. It is to be hoped that Mr. Wood will now give it a brief rest. In spite of the shortcomings in this work, however, Wednesday afternoon's concert reminded one of the miraculous progress that has been made in orchestral playing in London during the last four or five years. Until four or five years ago we had to put up with playing that was not merely now and again perfunctory, but always and consistently perfunctory. It was reckoned the proper thing for a conductor to compel his band to be perfunctory. It was the tradition, handed down from the old time before us. In the beginning of this century such a thing as a conductor was unknown: the first fiddler

used to beat time with his bow when things got very bad indeed, and a gentleman at the piano used to bang when it seemed more necessary than usual to pull the men together. Then Mendelssohn came, and confined himself to getting over the thin ice as rapidly as possible: not a story has come down to us to show that he once took the trouble to interpret a work conscientiously. Then, after Mendelssohn, Wagner came and got the reputation of being mad because he really wanted to interpret orchestral works as faithfully and beautifully as Liszt, for instance, interpreted pianoforte works. So Wagner was dismissed (he must indeed have been mad to dream of persuading the Philharmonic directors that artistic interpretations were things to be desired); and for a long time the London musical world rolled on as usual. Then Richter came, and that began the breaking up of the old order; and many years after Richter Mottl came; and finally Mr. Newman put Mr. Wood in power, and Mr. Wood has made the old style of conducting impossible. Could Wagner attend one of Mr. Wood's concerts he would be surprised at the development of orchestral playing here. Not only do our bandmen keep time and play with expression; but the desire for clean phrasing, perfect and strong accent, clean tone, has resulted in such refinements of bowing as you may see at Queen's Hall, where the “four-and-twenty fiddlers” move their arms with an unanimity so marvellous as to suggest that they are automata worked by one string pulled by Mr. Wood. The mass of wind-players play solidly together on occasion, but when solos occur they are delivered with a beauty and a virtuosity that in the old days one would have expected only from a virtuoso. Most of our players are virtuosos: the astonishing thing is that in broad little passages they play into one another's hands in a spirit so loyal to the conductor. The only weak point in the Queen's Hall band is the brass, and that, as I have repeatedly pointed out before, is not the fault of the men, but of Mr. Wood. He insists on holding them down to strict time: he refuses them the license that he willingly allows to the other players; and he too often forces their tone. Consequently there is always something hard, harsh, unpleasant, even uncouth, about their passages. If he would only allow them to chant freely he would get an amazing increase of sheer volume out of them, and nothing disagreeable would go with the increased volume. But this is the only fault I have to find with the Queen's Hall orchestra. It is the best band there has been, or at present exists, in this country; and while feeling justly proud of it, we should remember that we owe it to Mr. Newman.

J. F. R.

FINANCE.

DOWN to Thursday afternoon, when rumours were circulated pointing to the relief of Ladysmith and the capture of anything from 1,500 to 10,000 Boers, the tone of the Stock markets was extremely depressed. At the beginning of the week came the news of General Gatacre's reverse at Stormberg, and this tended to weaken markets which had already been rendered very sensitive, and not particularly happy, by the slowness of the forward movement of our troops and the paucity of favourable news. The settlement, too, tended to restrict dealings already small, and dear money, very stiff carrying-over rates, and fears of failures comprised a list of inimical influences to which an addition was made on Wednesday by the news of Lord Methuen's failure to take the Boer position at Magersfontein after two days' hard fighting. The weakness which followed the announcement of this repulse was pronounced in practically all sections of the House, and more especially, of course, in the South African mining section, and one has to go back a number of years for a parallel to that day's work. The recovery which was brought about next day was not maintained in the absence of confirmation, and the dealings induced by the rumour were professional in their character, the public having no time to come in. The circulation of the report coincided with the completion of the account with only three insignificant failures and none of those big events which the market pessimist

promised us, and also with a dubious rumour that the Austro-Hungarian Bank had come to the aid of the Bank of England with a couple of millions; and in the condition of things these influences counted for something. But the great factor in the improvement was the rumour of a great victory, and the general rise, particularly that in South Africans, affords another earnest of the advance which will be induced by definite news of such a tenour and by the resultant indication of some tangible progress towards a successful termination of the war. And as a sign of the confidence felt in regard to the ultimate issue, it may be pointed out that, although there were undoubtedly sales by bona-fide holders when matters looked bad, there was at the same time a lot of small buying at the lower prices, and the reader scarcely need be reminded that it is very unusual for the investing public to buy on a flat market.

A poor Bank return was expected and a poor Bank return we have got. There is a slight contraction in the note circulation—£48,000, to be exact; and the stock of coin and bullion shows a reduction of £992,000, so that the reserve shows a reduction of £944,000, the aggregate of £18,008,169 comparing with £18,951,594 last week and with £20,848,354 last year; while the ratio to liabilities is nearly 2 per cent. lower on the week and more than 8 per cent. lower on the twelve months. There is a contraction in Public Deposits of £805,500, which is accounted for by Government disbursements on account of Supply. An increase of £665,500 in Other Securities means that the market has received money from the discount business done with the Bank. The Bank directors made no change in the official rate, and it is now hoped that a 7 per cent. rate will not become necessary. Though the decision was generally expected, after it was known that the Bank of France had agreed to find the further sums of gold required for moving the Argentine wool crop, the actual announcement caused some relief, and Consols went slightly harder, being aided later on by the rumour, above alluded to, that the Austro-Hungarian Bank was willing to help. There is something ludicrous in the idea of this institution coming to the rescue of the Bank. While not exactly satisfactory, the position in Threadneedle Street seems scarcely to call for mock-heroic measures of this sort.

At the same time, the prospect of real relief from the monetary stringency which prevails is remote enough. Trade is active everywhere and calls for the employment of a relatively large quantity of gold, and the cessation of the Transvaal supply, representing about two millions sterling a month, is a serious factor in the circumstances. The market, we are afraid, will have to reconcile itself to a prolonged spell of dear money. So far the Government has made no further call to meet the expenses of the war, but how it has contrived to do without more money it is not easy to see. Certainly, it cannot go much longer without. America seems to promise shipments, but India will soon want money: trade activity is assured for some time at least to come: and it becomes a matter of doubt whether the relief which will come at the turn of the year, and which will be only very temporary at best, will justify the Bank in reducing its rate of discount. In an emergency, it seems probable to us that the Bank of France will give aid. The recent action of the governors of that body is supposed to have been influenced by political considerations, but this is a far-fetched hypothesis. The men at the head of the Bank of France are commercial men and will no doubt be quite willing to send gold here should there be sufficient inducement.

Apart from the rally on the reported big victory, Home Railways have been an unsatisfactory market, and of the influences which told against operations during the course of the last account, one at least—dear money—will, as we suggest, make itself felt for a considerable time to come. The moment is eminently favourable, if only investors would recognise the fact, for picking up good securities cheap. Though there may be a further fall in prices, there may on the other hand be a sharp recovery, and it

cannot be complained, after the recent continuous decline, that quotations are anywhere near intrinsic values, especially with trade active and the prospect of increased dividends as a result of the very excellent traffics of the half-year now drawing to a close. The past week's returns, though not so uniformly favourable as for some previous weeks, are still excellent, and of the big lines, only two show decreases. These are the Midland with £2,289, and the Great Northern with £1,614, and it is to be observed that the first of the two is £70,298 and the second £44,394 to the good for the half-year to date. The Great Western again heads the list of increases with £12,020, followed by the North-Eastern with £11,232; the North-Western with £7,530; and the Great Central with £6,027. The opportunity for those who care to purchase Home Railways is improved by the fall during the last account. Apart from North-Easterns, which lost four points on sales to acquire the new stock, and Great Easterns, which fell 2½ in connexion with the new capital requirements, the declines as a rule were sufficiently marked to make this class of stock a very desirable acquisition at the moment, when the healthy conditions that prevail are taken into account.

There has been little support on this side for American railroad securities, and Wall Street has been fitful, though towards the end of the week it has improved appreciably. The monetary stringency, the discouraging news from South Africa and the possibility of industrial share difficulties in view of possible anti-trust legislation, have been the chief influences at work on both sides in curtailing dealings. The first two are legitimate enough, but it seems to us that the fears for the trusts have been greatly exaggerated by the bears in New York for their own purposes. The chances of further legislation for the control of the trusts are exceedingly remote. There being practically nothing to fear on this score, and the prosperous condition of the country being assured for a long time ahead, there is every prospect of prices in the American railroad market going higher than the present level, with some encouragement in the way of good news from South Africa. Our remarks as to the desirableness of buying Home Railways apply with almost equal force to Americans. The dearth of money is a hindrance to speculative dealings, and at this week's settlement the general rate was 7½–8½ per cent., or fully 1 per cent. higher than last time.

The influences affecting South African mines during the past account were not favourable, and the making-up prices revealed a vast preponderance of declines. Rand Mines fell away to the extent of 3½, and numerous other shares show reductions ranging from 1½ down to ½. The few improvements in this section are all unimportant. As may be imagined, rates were very stiff, from 9 to 12 per cent. being exacted on Kaffirs and from 8 to 12 per cent. on Rhodesians. Not much can be said of this market for the new account. Quotations went up with a rush on the rumoured relief of Ladysmith, but it is quite impossible in the present position of affairs to make an intelligent forecast of the course of the market. All that can be said with certainty is that a decisive move on the part of our forces against the enemy will lead to a prompt rise and that further reverses will mean another slump similar to, if not worse than, that of Wednesday. Much the same remarks apply to Westralians, which sympathise with Kaffirs in matter of the war movements, with this difference, that the position there is not by any means so strong because the backing is not so powerful. Weak men would do well to leave mines alone for the present. The carrying over rate for Westralians, it may be mentioned here, was stiff—9 to 11 per cent.; and as in South Africans, the list reveals an almost unbroken series of declines, Lake Views leading the way with over 4½, without allowance for the dividend deducted during the account.

ISSUES OF THE WEEK.

This week has seen the appearance of the prospectus of the Calico Printers' Association, Limited, which is a combination of about forty-six companies. The share

capital is £6,000,000 in £1 shares, and there are 4 per cent. debentures to the amount of £3,200,000. The amount offered to the public is £3,404,830 in Ordinary shares and £2,133,334 in debentures.

The Central and Metropolitan Properties, Limited, offers 70,000 shares of £1 each and 4 per cent. debentures amounting to £150,000.

The Compensation and Guarantee Fund proposes to transact insurance business other than life assurance, and it has a capital of £400,000 in £5 shares, one-half of which is now offered. The company intends to make a speciality of the insurance of employers against liability.

INSURANCE.

PEOPLE are gradually getting wiser on the subject of life assurance. The statistics published by the Board of Trade in 1899, when compared with the corresponding figures issued in 1888, show a remarkable increase in the amount of Whole Life policies that are subject to only a limited number of premiums, and at the same time exhibit but a very small growth in the amount of assurances calling for premiums throughout the whole of life. For every £100 assured on the latter plan eleven years ago £113 is assured now, but for every £100 assured by limited payment life policies £213 is now in force. The figures published in the Blue-books are by no means up to date, and if the state of things as it exists to-day could be ascertained the contrast would be even greater. There are serious drawbacks and only one advantage in taking a policy that requires premiums to be paid throughout life, one drawback is that if the assured lives to a very advanced age he pays so much in premiums that the actual cost of the benefits he receives from the policy appear inadequate, although it should be borne in mind that he has been protected all the time, and might have received the full sum assured after the payment of only a few premiums. A second drawback is that at the later stages the assured may have to pay premiums at a time when work has ceased, and income diminished, and when consequently the difficulty of keeping up the payments is considerable. Both these drawbacks are successfully met by policies involving only a limited number of payments. The sole advantage of policies subject to premiums for the whole of life is that the annual cost is less but the difference is not very great, and it is safe to say that in almost every case a policy-holder would do best to confine within known limits the cost of his life assurance.

In order to make the matter perfectly clear we give a table, showing the average annual premiums for the assurance of £100, with participation in profits.

Premiums payable	Age at entering			
	30 years	40 years	50 years	60 years
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Annually for life ...	2 8 11	3 4 9	4 11 2	7 0 9
" " 25 years	3 0 6	3 14 2	4 17 3	—
" " 20 "	3 9 8	4 2 10	5 4 9	7 4 6
" " 15 "	3 18 9	4 18 7	6 1 5	7 19 7
" " 10 "	5 11 3	6 11 9	7 19 1	9 1 6

From this it will be seen that when the number of premiums is confined to 25 or 20 the difference is not excessive; but it is possible to reduce the premiums by adopting what is called the "discounted bonus" system, under which future bonuses are allowed from the outset in reduction of premium. By this plan a policy for £100 subject to premiums for only 20 years can be obtained at age 30 for £2 16s. 3d., at age 40 for £3 8s. 9d., and at age 50 for £4 5s. 3d. Of course if this system is adopted substantially no bonuses are available for increasing the sum assured until the policy has been in force for 20 years, so that the reduction in premium is effected by reducing the amount of the assurance, but while recognising this, the fact remains that in the long run the assurance of a sum to be paid at death may be more satisfactorily purchased by a limited number of premiums than by annual payments continuing for the whole of life.

Another feature about limited payment assurance is that in the event of the policy-holder ceasing to pay premiums he can claim a paid-up policy for the same

proportion of the original sum assured that the number of premiums paid bears to the number of premiums originally payable. Thus if he has taken a policy for £2,000, subject to annual premiums for 20 years, and after having paid 5 premiums wishes to pay no more, he can claim a paid-up policy for £500, which is one quarter of the original sum assured, just as the number of premiums paid is one quarter of the number of premiums originally arranged for. It is sometimes stipulated however that the paid-up policies so obtained shall not receive bonuses, even though a participating policy was originally taken. This is an arrangement that seems scarcely fair to the policy-holders especially after some few premiums have been paid.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE RIGHT OF SEARCH.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

13 December, 1899.

SIR,—In the notes in the commencement of the Review last Saturday you mention that it is a disputed fact whether a neutral ship conveyed by a war vessel of its own nationality is liable to search by a belligerent.

This is accurate but you did not mention that whilst foreign international lawyers have almost unanimously expressed their opinion against the right of search in the case above mentioned English lawyers on the contrary follow the celebrated decision of Sir William Scott and deny neutral ships conveyed by a vessel of war of their own nation the right to be exempt from search. Chancellor Kent and Mr. Justice Story went yet further and maintained that a neutral vessel under convoy of its own warship for the purpose of resisting search is a violation of neutrality as the neutral vessel is resisting the lawful right of the belligerent to search, by so doing the neutral vessel has rendered itself liable to seizure.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

ERNEST RASON.

ENGLAND AND AMERICA.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

New York, U.S.A., 29 November, 1899.

SIR,—The letter of Mr. A. Maurice Low in the SATURDAY REVIEW of 21 October controverting my statement regarding the revival of the anti-English feeling in this country was written before the outbreak of the war between England and the Transvaal, otherwise, I think, he would have hesitated to describe it as "grossly misleading." The feeling towards the two combatants in the war in South Africa, so far as it has been exhibited in the press, is pro-Boer. The "Literary Digest" of this city about three weeks ago published an analysis of the prevailing sentiment in the press, giving a list of the names of the principal papers throughout the Union favouring the British side and those favouring the Boers. Not only was the majority by a considerable number (I regret not having the figures under my hand but will procure and send them) for the Boers, but the majority included the most influential papers in the country.

Another point worth noticing is that large sympathetic meetings have been held here and elsewhere to express sympathy with the Boers at which Americans of every variety of origin spoke. I do not think I can give better proof of the general sentiment towards England. As to our Government we consider it to be its business to maintain friendliness with all countries, with England neither more nor less than with others; while it at the same time upholds the rights of this country all over the world. In case of any nation infringing on those rights, the fact of its speaking the same language would not prevent their being sustained at the point of the sword if necessary. No one however apprehends any dispute with England going as far as that, the reason being that Canada is regarded as a hostage for England's good will and good behaviour towards this country, and more so now than before it became England's highway to the Northern Pacific. This is no secret of state but is the generally entertained opinion of every American who thinks on these things.

Nothing is gained by trying to delude either the

British or American people with the idea that sentiment plays any part in the present friendly relations of the two Governments. Mr. Choate's post-prandial speeches with their pleasing phrases are understood to be merely passing compliments, on the principle so well understood here that it is easier to catch flies with honey than vinegar. But, as we say, sentiment will be found to cut no ice if ever the two countries should unhappily be involved in a serious dispute.

As regards the Alaska boundary dispute I have very good authority for saying that this country will not consent to the surrender of a foot of the territory claimed by it under the treaty of purchase with Russia, for in the words of a Republican politician we are expanding not contracting. *Do ut des* will be found to be the ruling principle in the transactions between this country and Great Britain when any giving on either side is wanted, but just at present there is none asked for of England as regards Canada nor any intended to Canada either in the way of concession or barter. That is about the position of the Alaska question as it stands to-day.

AN AMERICAN.

"SNIPPET LITERATURE."

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Hastings, 28 November, 1899.

SIR,—Some months ago you had an excellent article on this subject, which you very kindly allowed me to supplement by a letter pointing out the evils of the "skilled competition" system, and that the editor of one of these "snippet" journals had a little time before been convicted as a "rogue and a vagabond," and fined heavily for keeping a lottery. A recent trial before Mr. Justice Bruce and a special jury shows that the "lottery" element—i.e. the element of uncertainty—is not absent from the distribution of the prizes in these so-called "skilled competitions." A lady who sent in the sentence to which the prize was awarded did not receive the prize (forty guineas) which was stated to have been paid to a gentleman who was not produced at the trial. The coupons, twenty-six thousand in number, had all been destroyed, so that the authorship of the sentence could not be proved beyond doubt; but it seemed reasonable to expect that the recipient of the prize would have been called, and asked whether he had sent in the sentence to which the prize had been awarded. If he had, then two persons had hit upon the same words, which would have been odd, to say the least. In the end, the proprietors of the "snippet" journal agreed to pay the lady who was the plaintiff in the case the £42 and costs on the High Court scale, which the judge said was both graceful and generous of them, and the case terminated.

The honours of the case were with the servant-maid who was called to prove that she posted the letter containing the winning sentence, and who, on being quite gratuitously asked whether she ever took part in these competitions, replied with becoming disdain: "I do not—I do not believe in them, and would not waste a penny stamp upon them." This was a fitting rebuke to her mistress, and to the twenty-six thousand competitors who no doubt considered themselves legitimately employed in practising "the most ingenious and easy way of winning Golden Guineas ever devised," to quote the tempting lure of the "snippet" journal. Where the public are concerned is, that, at a time when there is a loud outcry for more judges owing to the block of legal business, the time of the Courts should be taken up with cases of this description. It seems to me that it should be just as difficult to recover in a case of this kind as in betting or gambling cases, and that the Courts should not be made the medium for extolling the "gracefulness and generosity" of the proprietors of journals of this class.—Your obedient servant,

J.

THE TRANSVAAL BOERS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Edinburgh, December, 1899.

SIR,—Many of our papers are making a mistake in applying the terms *Afrikaner*, *Boer*, and *Dutch* indis-

criminate to our antagonists at the Cape. *Afrikaner* was used originally to signify Dutch French or English born bred and resident in the colony. The term *Boer* is generally used to designate people born and resident in the Transvaal, or Orange Free State, before the former was created from the latter. Both terms and peoples have become entirely differentiated owing to the Boer beyond the Vaal River consisting now of a mixed nationality of Dutch, French, German, Hebrews, Austrians and others. The real Dutch of the Cape Colony proper were pre-eminently careful of family connexion and conservative of family history, attributes not yet belonging to the Boer communities of the present time.

The modern Boer has gradually developed into a new race of people of different pursuits, character, and nature from the old Dutch colonists. This speciality may be readily noticed by looking over old Dutch portraits in the pictures of Rubens, Teniers, Vandyke &c. and the sketches of the Boer of the day in the illustrated papers. Newspaper correspondents speak of the Boers having aquiline noses, a characteristic of some other foreign races, as none such appear in the old Dutch pictures. The Boer is now taller than the old stock, lanky, bony, of austere visage, but is a good horseman whereas the old Dutchmen were squat in figure, fleshy, rubicund in visage, but were good sailors and seamen.

A similar diversity of people may be seen in the United States, colonised at first from a common origin from the Eastern seaboard, where the Bostonian and Philadelphian appear now quite different physically and morally from the backwoodsman, filibuster and cowboys of the Western States, their descendants. It is just as unsuitable to apply the terms *Afrikaners*, *Boers* and *Dutch* indiscriminately as it would be to use the terms *Bostonian* and *filibuster* as interchangeable in the United States.

A similar misapprehension of nationality seems to have taken place in the papers again respecting the South African students in the University of Edinburgh, who are described as Boers, whereas these generally were not born in Boer lands at all and had possibly never seen the Transvaal or Orange Free State. They come from the Cape Colony proper, and are just as well educated and mannered as any students of an English college, and have been pupils mainly of the University of Cape Town, now a first-class institution.

The ethnology of South Africa has now entered a transitional period from the stage of the early pioneer colonists to the stage of new races developed gradually out of the mixed and indigenous nationalities of the Cape. The Transvaal now, like the Orange Free State half a century since, may be considered to be the hinterland of the Cape Colony, as much as the back districts of Nigeria, and the Gold Coast. This mixed population may be presumed to consist of the landless, impecunious and unsettled elements of the Cape Colony, supplemented by the numerous gold-mining classes, prospecting its industrial resources.—I am, yours truly,

TRAVELLER.

LYRIC FROM THE GERMAN.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Feltham, 13 December, 1899.

DEAR SIR,—Is it not the best guide to translation to find first the metre that will best express the original thought upon some good precedent, and then to follow it? No translation from a German lyric can well surpass Thackeray's "King on the Tower" in its graceful beauty.

The cold grey hills they bind me around,
And the darksome valleys are sleeping below;
And the winds, as they pass over all this ground,
Bring me never a sound of woe.

The lyric treated by your correspondents might run something like this:

The mountain-peaks are quiet on high,
By the still tree-tops never breath confessed;
Not a sound of birds in the woodland sky,
Yet a little—and thou shalt rest.

Truly yours, HERMAN MERIVALE.

REVIEWS.

FALSE DEMOCRACY.

"First Principles in Politics." By William Samuel Lilly. London: Murray. 1899. 14s.

"OH for a statesman—a single one—who understands the living might inherent in a principle." This aspiration of Coleridge, which Mr. Lilly most fittingly inscribes over the entrance, as it were, of his book, can hardly strike a thinking man—not to speak of a political philosopher—as in any sense out of date. It may however console him by suggesting the reflection that if we are no better than we were, according to Coleridge, we can hardly be much worse. Every Englishman, as he sighs over the sorrows of France, will readily see the application of Coleridge's sentiment to his dear neighbour's condition, but Mr. Lilly, with the courage of a clearly thought out opinion, teaches him to apply it to himself. Every politician and as many electors as could hope to understand it should be made to read Mr. Lilly's book, taking it as a tonic. It might not—it probably would not—please most of them; but its perusal would not be the less healthful for that. The book is too much detached from the hurry, the sciolism, the mediocrity of this day to be acceptable to the average man. If he *should* read it, he will put the book down a surprised and somewhat humiliated person. His favourite shibboleths he will find to be simple nonsense, his cherished images he will recognise to be clay, the foundations of his politics shifting sands, and his proudest evidences of progress the surest signs of decay. Disillusionising is not a pleasant process; but it is a most necessary one, and we can only feel the sincerest satisfaction that one so entirely competent as Mr. Lilly has been willing to take up the task. In some ways he is better fitted for it than Mr. Lecky; for there is nothing in his book of the paralysing touch of the pessimist. Mr. Lilly's work is profoundly constructive; he is not the sceptic, who merely criticises from without; he is not content pleasantly to tell us that we are travelling on a road that leads nowhere, but puts us on our way back to the turning that leads somewhere.

The moral, the message of Mr. Lilly's book is—not the danger of Socialism, as has been mistakenly represented, but—that principle or right is the guiding star of the State; that a nation is not a mere collection of atoms but a person. These premises exclude government by mere majority. Hence the exposure of such a system is the cardinal point of Mr. Lilly's argument. The democracy of numbers, "False Democracy," as Mill called it—and his witness is peculiarly significant—sounds in its very statement so foolish, so destitute of anything to recommend it that in the absence of its own history the fact would be inexplicable. For what does it mean? It means entrusting work of the highest importance known to men on earth, work the most delicate in its nature, the most difficult to master, requiring for its effective execution the greatest qualities of character and intellect, to those who so far from being specially endowed by nature, by training, by experience for such a task, care nothing about it, must necessarily lack the experience and training required, are low in the scale of intellectual qualification, and are accepted without the smallest inquiry as to character. In any other business than the greatest—that of government—such a proceeding would be written down as sheer imbecility. Nor can it plead theoretic perfection in its excuse; for it rests on a theory now wholly discredited. We are all agreed that so far from all men being alike and equal, no two men are alike and no two men are equal in capacity. Mr. Lilly has no difficulty in showing that the rule of numbers—the rule of the average man—has not belied its promise. In America, in France, in Spain, in Italy it has so far failed to secure the representation of the people that it has driven out of public life all the better elements of the community. It has left government mainly in the hands of ill-educated men of shady character, with whom the good citizens think it a dishonour to be associated. In no one of these countries does any respectable body of opinion ascribe what prosperity the land may enjoy to its government. In England it is true the

same result has not followed. Public life here enlists in its service some of the best elements of our population, and we doubt, *pace* Mr. Lilly, if there is any deterioration in the personnel of Parliament. But the very exception in favour of England drives home the arguments. In spite of the extended suffrage, we have not the rule of numbers unqualified. We have what Mr. Lilly very accurately describes as "a directing class." This directing class provides more or less trained men—by which we emphatically do not mean mere experts, but men in a real sense educated—for the work of public life, and amongst these the ablest tend to go to the front, though too often now it is the wealthiest who do that instead. The bulk of the people, as everywhere, wishing to be governed and not to govern, prefer to leave public work to the directing or managing class to do for them. This has done much to save England so far. Mr. Lilly, doubtful of the future, is for strengthening the House of Lords by a system of selection from the peerage *inter se*, and by the inclusion of further elements which would make the Upper House really representative of the country and the Empire as the House of Commons certainly is not. From a multiple vote, recognising qualifications, such as education, other than that of mere numbers, Mr. Lilly does not expect much, though apparently he would approve of the experiment being tried. If what may be called the difficulties of machinery can be got over, there is much to be said for such a plan. It corrects the mischief of counting only by heads, while it leaves everyone an ostensible place in the system of national government. We say "ostensible" because it is, of course, blatant pedantry to suppose that it is only or indeed principally the vote which secures recognition, representation, or influence in the ordering of the nation's affairs. But the possession of a vote makes it easier for a man to realise his public place, and thus it may possibly be turned to account educationally. As an additional interest, too, it may serve to relieve monotony of life, a serious social problem in the case of large groups of the population. Thus, if its power for mischief is drastically neutralised, universal suffrage may even be beneficial.

But political arrangements are of less importance than matters social and economic. This is now realised generally, and by none better than the working classes. They can no longer be moved by franchise reforms or tirades against the House of Lords. They see that Liberalism, which if it has meant anything has meant "False Democracy" and Individualist Economics, has not conferred on those most in need of state assistance the advantages they hoped, or effected the improvements which were their due. Mr. Lilly recognises the fact and admits the desirability of reversion in many things to what we shall not shrink from describing as socialistic methods, which obtained in anti-democratic days. He is extremely severe in his condemnation of *laissez-faire* economics, and welcomes state interference in the solution of industrial or social problems. It is true he prescribes it partly as an antidote to Socialism. But does he not rather narrow the scope of that unfortunate term, which he seems to identify with the rigid rule of numbers and artificial equalisation of everything, a consummation to be reached by tyranny and confiscation? That is, undoubtedly, the gospel of Socialism as preached by many, and unfortunately for the Socialists it is the only view of their philosophy that has ever commended itself to the general public. One dare not use the word "socialist" in ordinary conversation from the certainty that it will be taken to imply anarchy and plunder. It is remarkable that while, as Mr. Lilly points out, the burden of socialist literature is that all the rest of the world are thieves, that is just the one and only view the rest of the world can be induced to take of Socialists. It is unfortunate, for Socialism has a better and far wider significance. Is Mr. Lilly right in linking its economic system, as of necessity, with undiluted "False Democracy"? The English Fabians, at any rate, we believe would tell him that in so doing he wronged them. They do not, we understand, worship the rule of the average man. Surely the further substitution of the state for the individual as the unit of

action and the vesting of ownership (*dominium*, possession might be elsewhere) in the case of industrial property in the state does not necessarily involve absolute democracy. The very conception of the state as a person shows that it does not. Indeed we are strongly of opinion that as state aid and state control and even state ownership is more and more introduced, as it is certain to be, the great political discovery will be the necessity of doing away with the rule of numbers if the machine is to work at all.

TWO SYMBOLISTS.

"Poésies de Stéphane Mallarmé." Bruxelles: E. Deman. 1899.

"Histoires Souveraines." Par Villiers de l'Isle-Adam. Bruxelles: E. Deman. 1899.

CERTAIN writers, in whom the artist's contempt for common things has been carried to its utmost limit, should only be read in books of beautiful and slightly unusual form. Perhaps of all modern writers Villiers and Mallarmé have most carefully sought the most remote ideal, and seem most to require some elaborate presentation to the reader. Mallarmé, indeed, delighted in heaping up pretty obstacles in the reader's way, not only in the concealment of his meaning by style, but in a furtive, fragmentary, and only too luxurious method of publication, which made it difficult for most people to get his books at all, even for unlimited money. Villiers, on the contrary, after publishing his first book, the "Premières Poésies" of 1859, in the delicate type of Perrin of Lyons, on ribbed paper, with old gold covers, became careless as to how his books appeared, and has to be read in a disorderly crowd of volumes, some of them as hideous as the original edition of "L'Eve Future," with its red stars and streaks, its Apollo and Cupid and grey city landscape. It is therefore with singular pleasure that we welcome the two beautiful books which have lately been published by M. Deman, the well-known publisher of Rops: one, the fullest collection of Mallarmé's poems which has ever been published, the other a selection of twenty stories by Villiers. The Mallarmé is white and red, the poems printed in italics, a frontispiece by Rops; the Villiers is a large square volume in shimmering dark green and gold, with headpieces and tailpieces, in two tints, by M. Th. van Rysselberghe. These scrolls and titles are done with a sort of reverent self-suppression, as if, for once, decoration existed for a book and not the book for the decoration, which is hardly the quality for which modern decorators are most conspicuous.

In the "Poésies" we have, no doubt, Mallarmé's final selection from his own poems. Some of it is even new. The magnificent and mysterious fragment of "Hérodiade," his masterpiece, perhaps, is, though not indeed completed, more than doubled in length by the addition of a long passage on which he was at work almost to the time of his death. It is curious to note that the new passage is written in exactly the style of the older passage, though in the interval between the writing of the one and the writing of the other Mallarmé had completely changed his style. By an effort of will he had thought himself back into an earlier style, and the two fragments join without an apparent seam. There were, it appears, still a hymn or lyric spoken by S. John and a concluding monologue, to be added to the poem; but we have at least the whole of the dialogue between Hérodiade and the Nurse, certainly a poem sufficiently complete in itself. The other new pieces are in the latest manner, mainly without punctuation; they would scarcely be alluring, one imagines, even if punctuated. In the course of a few centuries, we are convinced, every line of Mallarmé will have become perfectly clear, as a corrupt Greek text becomes clear in time. Even now a learned commentator could probably do much to explain them, at the cost of a life-long labour; but scholars only give up their lives to the difficult authors of a remote past. Mallarmé can afford to wait: he will not be forgotten; and for us of the present there are the clear and lovely early poems, so delightfully brought together in the white and red book before us.

"L'insensibilité de l'azur et des pierres," a serene and gem-like quality, entirely his own, is in all these poems, in which a particular kind of French verse realises its ideal. Mallarmé is the poet of a few, a limited poet, perfect within his limits as the Chinese artist of his own symbol. In a beautiful poem he compares himself to the painter of tea-cups who spends his life in painting a strange flower

"Sur ses tasses de neige à la lune ravie," a flower which has perfumed his whole existence, since, as a child, he had felt it graft itself upon the "blue filigree of his soul."

A very different image must be sought if we wish to sum up the characteristics of Villiers de l'Isle-Adam. An uncertain artist, he was a man of passionate and lofty genius, and he has left us a great mass of imperfect work, out of which we have to form for ourselves whatever notion we can of a man greater than his work. Our first impression, on looking at the twenty stories which make up the present selection, was that the selection had been badly made. Where is "Les Demoiselles de Bienfilâtre"? we asked ourselves, remembering that little ironical masterpiece; where is "Le Convive des Derniers Fêtes," with its subtlety of horror; "Sentimentalisme," with its tragic and tender modernity; "La Reine Ysabeau," with its sombre and taciturn intensity? Story after story came into our mind, finer, it seemed to us, in the artistic qualities of the story than many of those selected. Second thoughts inclined us to think that the selection could scarcely have been better. For it is a selection made after a plan, and it shows us, not indeed always Villiers at his best as a story-teller, but, throughout, Villiers at his highest point of elevation; the man, whom we are always trying to see through his work, and the man as he would have seen himself. There is not a collection of stories in French of greater nobility than these "Histoires Souveraines" in which a regal pomp of speech drapes a more than regal sovereignty of soul. The Villiers who mocked mean things and attacked base things is no longer there; the idealist is at home in his own world, among his ideals.

THE PRIVATE SECRETARY.

"Recollections by Sir Algernon West." London: Smith, Elder. 1899. 21s.

ON laying down these pleasant and amusing volumes it is easy to understand why Sir Algernon West was such a success. In 1851 he entered the Inland Revenue Department as a temporary clerk at 6s. a day, and it seems but yesterday that he quitted it as Chairman and a K.C.B. But men never understand what they have done themselves. On an early page in the first volume the author says, with explicit reference to Mr. Dodson, afterwards Lord Monk Bretton, and with plainly implicit reference to Mr. Childers, "through life I have often wondered at the success of some men whose qualifications did not seem to justify it." Yet Sir Algernon need not have wondered, if he had strictly examined himself as to the secret of his own advancement. Sir George Cornewall Lewis observed, with his profound, if cynical, sagacity that "every man was able adequately to perform the duties of an office which he was clever enough to get." Nothing is easier to preach, and nothing is harder to practise, than the gospel of getting-on. Make yourself pleasant to the world, and the world will make itself pleasant to you, is the formula, which sounds simple and obvious enough, but is in reality not so. Its meaning has been, thoroughly grasped by Sir Algernon West. Unconsciously he reveals himself in these recollections as one born to be liked, used, trusted, and finally promoted, by his fellows. In the two volumes there is not a note of querulousness or egoism. There is no obtrusion of disagreeable domestic struggles—only once a cheery reference to the *res angusta domi*—though in his early days he must have suffered from impecuniosity. His modesty about himself seems perfectly genuine, and quite unaffected by the fact that for many years he was not only Mr. Gladstone's right hand but a sort of universal referee amongst the great ones of the earth. Though "bred in the kennel" of the Whigs (his

mother was a Walpole and his wife a granddaughter of Lord Grey), and though private secretary to the most passionate of party leaders, there is not a harsh word about the Tories in the book, which closes with an enthusiastic appreciation of Lord Randolph Churchill. Once only is Sir Algernon West off his guard, and gives us a peep into his method of popularity. "On 24 June, walking away from a house where we had been dining, Charles Clifford told me that he regretted not having congratulated our host on his daughter's marriage. I said: 'That is lucky, as it is broken off; I always think it wiser only to squeeze a man's hand, as that does not commit you; it may mean sympathy, congratulation, or condolence.'" And people have asked how Sir Algernon West got to the top of the tree!

Good-looking young men, with aristocratic connexions, whom Cabinet Ministers and (more important) Cabinet Ministers' wives call "Algy," do not linger long as temporary clerks on 6s. a day. Mr. West was promptly made a sort of assistant private secretary at the Admiralty, whence he was transferred to the India Office as private secretary to Sir Charles Wood afterwards Lord Halifax. The beginning of his fortune was of course his appointment as private secretary to Mr. Gladstone, upon his accession to power in 1868. There are certain statesmen, who are wise enough to see that in giving their private secretaries important posts in the Civil Service, they not only reward faithful friends, but vastly increase their own power. At one time so many of the best berths were filled by Mr. Gladstone's private secretaries that Lord Randolph Churchill, in his own dialect, described the whole Civil Service as "a knot of d—d Gladstonians." Lord Beaconsfield, Mr. Goschen, and Sir William Harcourt, have all secured promotion for their secretaries, though Lord Salisbury and Mr. Balfour appear to be either afraid of the charge of nepotism, or indifferent to this means of increasing their power. How mindful Mr. Gladstone was on this point is illustrated by a story which, seriously told as it is, would seem to show an utter absence of humour, not only in Mr. Gladstone, but in Sir Algernon West. At the close of a peculiarly harassing debate in 1870, the Prime Minister and his private secretary walked home together in the dawning day, and on parting at the foot of the Duke of York's steps, weary as he was, Mr. Gladstone said, "Well, my work is now nearly over. If I can pass Irish Education and find a fitting place for you in the Civil Service, I shall have done all I wish to do and be able to retire."

Mr. Gladstone has often been taxed with heartlessness, as well as want of humour; but there is a very touching letter in these Recollections, which refutes that charge, at all events with regard to his own family. Mr. Herbert Gladstone stood for Middlesex in 1880, and two of the young Wests helped him in his candidature. In writing from Midlothian to thank their father Mr. Gladstone says, "Experience has shown that you judged well and wisely in encouraging him to stand. Had I been on the ground, my heart might have failed me, but I would not have stood in his way. The accounts of him give me intense joy, but no surprise. I think his face is worth a thousand votes." That is the prettiest and most human thing we have ever read from Mr. Gladstone's pen. Before leaving office in 1874 Mr. Gladstone made Mr. West a Commissioner of Inland Revenue, his colleagues on the Board being Herries and Alfred Montgomery, the celebrated dandy of Disraeli's salad days. In 1881, on the retirement of Herries the Prime Minister lost no time in appointing his *fidus Achates* to the vacant chair. The Chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue is one of the greatest permanent officials in this country. The relations between the Treasury and Somerset House are of the most intimate kind, and the Chairman of the Inland Revenue Board has more to do with most Budgets than the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Though as we have said Sir Algernon West is unaffectedly modest about his own performances, it is evident that he not only suggested to Mr. Gladstone in 1880 the substitution of the beer duty for the malt tax, but was largely instrumental in the success of the Budget which effected this great change in taxation. It is interesting to learn from so unimpeachable an authority that Lord Randolph Churchill's 1887

Budget, which was all cut and dried before his resignation, and which we suppose will see the light when his papers come to be published, would have been the most original and important of the century. It was not however alone in his official capacity that Sir Algernon West played a quiet but important part in the politics of his day. Mr. Gladstone would use him as a go-between and would consult him long after he had ceased to be his secretary. In forming his short-lived Government in 1886 Mr. Gladstone asked Sir Algernon whom he would propose as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and West suggested Mr. Chamberlain; but Mr. Gladstone was sure the City would be "terrified" if the author of "ransom" was made guardian of the public purse.

As a *raconteur* Sir Algernon West is a fearless retailer of chestnuts, a dangerous business as it brings him sometimes into direct conflict with other purveyors of the same article, such as Sir William Fraser. The latter for instance has told us in his book on Disraeli that the aged statesman, whenever he met someone whose name he could not remember, used to ask "Well, how's the old complaint?" Sir Algernon cites this popular trick as an example of Lord Palmerston's *bonhomie*. There is a delicate satire about the question which is more characteristic of Lord Beaconsfield than Lord Palmerston, who as a rule was coarsely humorous, though there is real wit in his reply to the deputation that came to propose a National Portrait Gallery and to protest against works of art being put in the cellars of Burlington House. "Well," said Palmerston, "I will do what I can, but you know that '*ars est celare artem*.'" One of the best of Sir Algernon's stories is the reply of Lord Granville's chef to an inquiry during the siege of Paris whether he would like to be back in his own country. "No," said the cook, "I would sooner make *entrées* here than *sorties* in Paris." As a specimen of Alfred Montgomery's old-world humour we are given the following. "On one baking hot day the Chairman's private secretary came into the Board-room with his coat off. Montgomery was much shocked, and as the secretary was leaving the room he called him back and said: 'Mr. — if you should find it convenient in this hot weather to take off your trousers pray do not let any feeling of respect for the Board stand in your way.'" That Sir Algernon appreciates a real touch of horror may be seen from this story. "During Sir George Trevelyan's first visit to the Secretary's Lodge in Phoenix Park, he went to the window and pushed aside the curtain, and underneath its folds lay the blood-stained coat of poor Frederick Cavendish, which had never been removed from the room into which his body was first brought after the murder." No wonder Sir George Trevelyan's hair turned white at the Irish Office! There are many other stories, for which we are grateful, though we think we might have been spared the Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Melbourne and Lord Westbury's gamekeeper, though it is quite possible that the younger generation has not heard them. We part with regret from a well-bred and benevolent man of the world, and we are a little envious of the luck of one who was not only given good cards but the skill to play them.

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY SCOTLAND.

"The Social Life of Scotland in the Eighteenth Century." By Henry Grey Graham. 2 vols. London: Black. 1899. 24s.

OUR older historians were disposed, in dealing with the eighteenth century, to ignore the existence of Scotland, except when a Pretender took the field. Their silence was justifiable from their point of view. If history is merely the record of political conflicts and of legislation achieved, then the Scotland of that period scarcely deserves an historian. She produced, it is true, some able lawyers and officials, but their work was limited in scope. She sent one or two able orators to the united Parliament, but they rarely or never turned the scale in a debate. To Scotch affairs both Parliaments and cabinets were usually indifferent so long as peace prevailed; and laws which merely affected Scotland seldom rose to the rank of burning questions. To-day,

however, a broader conception of history is in vogue. We expect the historian to trace the evolution of ideas, even when those ideas have no obvious bearing upon political transactions; we also demand a detailed statement of social changes and their hidden causes. From Mr. Graham's point of view Scotland furnished abundant materials for history in the hundred years which followed upon the Union. Two volumes are a welcome contribution to our knowledge of the subject—none the less welcome because the learned author seldom deviates into dulness.

Historians of social life have usually two conspicuous failings. Often they are uncritical in their use of authorities, and allow a large license to their imaginations. More often still they begin their work without any clear idea of the questions which are to be elucidated, and end without having established any generalisation of value. From these failings Mr. Graham is not wholly free. His chapter on the Universities would have been improved if he had consulted other archives besides those of Glasgow, or even if he had resorted to the best second-hand authorities. There is more to be known about the University of Aberdeen than can be gathered from Kennedy's Annals; and this is not the only case in which we are put off with an inadequate reference. Mr. Graham's method, again, leaves something to be desired. It is often mechanical and suggests the commonplace-book. We doubt whether he has arrived at any clear general conclusions. But, if we read him aright, he inclines to trace every change to economic causes. He suggests this theory by many incidental remarks and still more by the grouping of his facts. In the chapters devoted to education and religion he demonstrates that the period of change and progress begins about the middle of the century. In the last chapter of all, which might more appropriately have been printed as an introduction, he shows that this date is the turning point in the economic history of Scotland; since for the first time the new industries, to which the Union gave an opening, began to repay the political sacrifices which had been made in their behalf. Other improvements followed in the train and as the logical consequence of material prosperity.

There is, we allow, some truth in this reading of the period. Economic causes explain many changes of the eighteenth century. But they do not explain all. Other influences were at work; and Mr. Graham has hardly given these their proper meed of recognition. He is, for example, less than generous to the Established Kirk and the various seceding bodies. He argues that they were hostile to education and the higher precepts of morality; that their government was in the hands of the most ignorant and bigoted section of the community; that their theology was degenerate and sterile; that they were popular because they sank to the popular level and humoured every prejudice of conservatism. We doubt the fairness of the method by which he proves his case. It is harsh to judge any religious communion by the parts of its literature which command the widest sale. Admitting that the Presbyterian Calvinism of the eighteenth century was altogether reactionary and useless, we should recognise that the national character, such as it then was, had been virtually created by Calvinism. Modern Scotland will continue to feel the influence of Knox and the Covenanters when the ethical platitudes of Blair and Robertson have passed into deserved oblivion. Turning to another instance we find that Mr. Graham, while acknowledging the importance of the Universities, has not adequately described the intellectual revival of which they were the focus, and has completely failed to account for it. In a limited sense the new movement of thought was due to the increase of material prosperity. But, after saying this, we have still to show why the revolt against Calvin and Aristotle assumed the special forms of deism, of the common-sense philosophy, and of devotion to the physical sciences. This problem Mr. Graham does not seem to realise. It is just as well that he forbore to treat of literature. For we suspect that he would have deduced even Burns and Scott from economic causes. His book, in short, is incomplete and not conspicuously original. None the less it is so good that we are sorry it is not better. Though it

cannot be regarded as a final authority, it is a marked advance upon anything of the kind which has hitherto appeared in print.

FROM THE VELDT.

"A Breath from the Veldt." By John Guille Millais. Second and revised edition. London: Sotheman. 1899. 42s. net.

OPPORTUNE in a double sense is this handsome second and revised edition of Mr. Millais' work—a work as well known as the necessarily limited number of purchasers could make it. The reissue is timely first because the war turns our eyes to many of the fair scenes (now desolated) which Mr. Millais describes, and secondly because the exquisite frontispiece by the late Sir J. E. Millais and the illustrations by the author make it a magnificent gift-book. Mr. Millais loves the Karoo, and all that lives upon it: he is a sportsman, naturalist, artist. He finds the claims of the Karoo superior to those of Florida, of California, of British Columbia, of Mashonaland. But if the Karoo charms him in particular, all Africa "with its sunshine, its dust, its hardships and its many attractions" appeals to him. He spent much of his time in the company of Boers and he gives us many glimpses of their better side—glimpses, it should be said, which are in keeping with those supplied by other travellers. There is, Mr. Millais confesses, nothing heroic about the Boer, but he is not quite as he is painted by those who have only heard gossip as to his worst characteristics. Most Boers, Mr. Millais assures us, "are very ordinary creatures—stupid, conceited and lumpish to the last degree—but to my mind it is simply abominable to hear a race of fine hardy pioneers and farmers as they are, abused by a lot of third-rate potmen, bar loafers and counter jumpers who know as little of the real Boer as they do of the solar system, and judge of them only by a class of anti-English Boers which they have done so much to create." If Mr. Millais' classification of Boer critics in England, at any rate, is to be taken literally we can only say his explorations in that direction have not been as extensive and intimate as his movements on the veldt. Mr. Millais' friend, Oom Piet, is typical of the Boer whom most travellers are fortunate in meeting—honest, open-hearted, simple, well-disposed fellows. They are the victims not the manipulators of the political machinery which has grown to be the curse of the country. An anecdote related by Mr. Millais seems to us to point the essential difference between the average Boer and the average Briton at home. Oom Piet asked what such a book as Mr. Millais' would cost. When the sum of two or three pounds was mentioned, he exclaimed: "Almighty! are they all d—d fools in England? Why I could buy a good cow for that here." We wonder whether the author presented his friend with a copy. Even Oom Piet might for once be inclined to agree that a cow is not the only possession which can give satisfaction to civilised existence.

OUR NAVY.

"Our Navy for a Thousand Years." Captain S. Eardley-Wilmot, R.N. London: Sampson Low. 1899. 12s. 6d.

AS the author very truly remarks in the opening lines of his preface, "No romance should form more attractive reading to young and old than the history of our Navy." Captain Eardley-Wilmot concisely but lucidly traces the gradual growth of both maritime enterprise and naval architectural methods, culminating in the production of what is to-day the most perfect and efficient sea force in the world. His interesting pages remind us of the great reluctance with which the authorities introduced steam-power into the Royal Navy. What new developments may not be in the future! The very birth of the ironclad, the various improvements in arming and armaments, the initiation of the turret and barbette systems, and the ultimate adoption of the torpedo as a weapon of war are each dealt with in a masterly way. Equally able is Captain Eardley-Wilmot's account of the changes in shipbuilding and in the fighting abilities of our

vessels of war from as far back as the days of the early Briton with his skin-covered wicker-work canoe, to the monster modern battleship, with her equally wonderful escort the torpedo-craft. The book details the causes that brought about each important change in our naval force, at the same time illustrating, by the clear proof of facts, the absolute necessity of maintaining supremacy of the sea. The author shows how neglect to keep our navy in a thoroughly efficient and sufficient state in every respect, has invariably resulted in disaster. Discussing the question of landing naval brigades to assist in campaigns, he makes a pertinent observation which may be commended to the especial attention of those who adversely criticise the practice: "Naval brigades have taken part in operations on shore for over two hundred years; but the siege of Sebastopol is unique as regards the navy, for without the help of the latter it is doubtful whether the expedition could possibly have succeeded." "Our Navy" should find its way into all school libraries; its educational value could hardly be over-rated.

A BATCH OF NOVELS.

"Terence." By B. M. Croker. London: Chatto and Windus. 1899. 6s.

"A Fair Imperialist." By V. J. Leatherdale. London: Unwin. 1899. 6s.

"An Englishman." By Mary L. Pendered. London: Methuen. 1899. 6s.

"Further Adventures of Captain Kettle." By Cutcliffe Hyne. London: Pearson. 1899. 6s.

"Miranda of the Balcony." By A. E. W. Mason. London: Macmillan. 1899. 6s.

THE authors of the three novels which head this list propound problems. Mrs. Croker has at once a beautiful Australian heiress masquerading as a poor relative and a former cavalry officer driving a coach. The two deceptions are patently destined to cross each other out, like the top and bottom of those far-fetched fractions in algebra which were all the time equal to one—or used it to be nought? Being, anyhow, an expert, and addressing a public that does not face such problems for the first time, the author performs the operation with a formula or two and a little Irish local colour. The "Fair Imperialist," on the other hand, is a scornful girl who does not know that her father would be a beggar but for a sombre, helpful, and apparently unromantic business man who loves her. The author makes some cheerful and varied efforts to start, much as one does in a donkey cart; then, with the unconcern one assumes in such circumstances, and remembering an engagement with a Russian spy, she strolls away for a minute or two. But the traitor leads her a complicated dance of plots and counterplots (which, however, she rightly refuses to fathom, seeing it is all an aside), and she does not get back till the end of the book—to find the story chewing a thistle where she left it. The reader, in the part of the man at the corner with his hands in his pockets and a straw in his mouth, experiences a moment of suspense. But the lady is too tired to mind who looks on. She claps her sombre man and her scornful maid into a Richter concert and, under cover of the Pastoral Symphony, joins their hands. The author of "An Englishman" possesses a level-headedness which makes her allow the hero of her novel to show his faults, distressing faults, up to the end. Such detachment, rarely arrived at in any story, is particularly admirable in this case, for the hero is a country grocer, and the purpose of the story is to show how a well-born girl, his sister's governess, conceives first admiration and then love for her employer. The author has moreover both leisure and a broad mind. But these qualities are obscured by a smiling, a monumental inertia, and "An Englishman" is as nearly unreadable as fiction can be. No stone is left unturned, but not from any too eager curiosity, no tea-spoon undescribed, but not from any passion for detail. No critical sense takes the place of absent instinct—not even a girding up of the loins. There is a tactlessness which rides over everything, not clumsily nor offensively, but un-

questioning, complacent. No doubt men also err in this way.

Mr. A. E. W. Mason writes more distinguished nonsense than Mr. Cutcliffe Hyne. At any rate, he has done so this time. There are adventures as unexpected in "Miranda" as in the "Further Adventures"; but the one is whimsical, while the other is a little jaded. Mr. Cutcliffe Hyne, in fact, is somewhat tied down by the highly characterised Kettle, whose remarkable qualities have won the deserved praise of excellent parody, and we like best, in this second collection of his exploits, those passages where the author proceeds, with much dignity, to wink. Mr. Mason is fettered in no way, he appears to write nothing that does not entertain him, and to leave out nothing that does. Least of all is he hindered by an improbability, and he is long past the stage where an author comes upon his reader trying to look as if he did not know he had a most uncomfortable coincidence up his sleeve. Mr. Mason dances on his reader's credulity. It is a pleasant sensation, for he is a light weight. And then where naturalness matters, in presenting his characters and their feelings, he is natural enough, and gives the illusion of reality with a certain brightness of touch. There is something very engaging in the adventure writing of a novelist who could, one feels sure, hold us equally well with a story in which no one left Grosvenor Square.

NEW BOOKS AND REPRINTS.

"Our Living Generals." By Arthur Temple. London: Andrew Melrose. 1899. 3s. 6d.

The second edition of this work appears at an opportune moment when our thoughts are mainly concentrated on things military. Though containing nothing either new or deserving special attention, "Our Living Generals" is interesting in its way. But the unceasing note of superlative admiration is apt to become wearisome. Twelve eminent—though we cannot admit them all to be our most eminent—commanders have been selected, and every single action in their lives merits, according to the author, the most unstinted praise. In this respect the book is overdone. The chapters describing Sir Redvers Buller, Sir George White and Sir William Butler will no doubt prove of exceptional interest just now to the general reader. Lord Wolseley's career as Adjutant-General and Commander-in-Chief is not discussed but only those brilliant exploits in the field, which made his name. Yet his administrative career merits much of that praise which Mr. Douglas distributes so lavishly in other directions. The office of commander-in-chief has in Lord Wolseley's time—needless to say through no fault of his own—become to a great extent an anomaly. Now the adjutant and quartermaster-general, the inspector of fortifications and the director of ordnance have the direct ear of the Secretary of State, with the result that the commander-in-chief is chief in little but name. Yet in spite of this Lord Wolseley has done an immense amount of good. No doubt the arrangement suits the civilian side well. It has certainly increased its power, at the expense of the military side. It has in fact substituted five comparatively weak and isolated channels, for one strong mouthpiece by which military opinion is conveyed to the political chief. The whole question should be reconsidered de novo; the War Office is a house divided against itself.

"Case Law of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1897." By R. M. Minton-Senhouse. London: Effingham Wilson and Sweet and Maxwell. 1899. 1s.

All the case law up to date on the Compensation Act is collected in this little volume. It is a convenient and indispensable accompaniment to the text of the Act for lawyers, employers and insurance officials, as well as for members of the public or politicians whose interest lies in estimating the working of an important piece of social legislation. Mr. Minton-Senhouse has contributed very materially to the defence of the Act from much hasty criticism by publishing letters from three such representative men as Mr. George Livesey, Mr. Thomas Burt, M.P., and Mr. C. T. Clifford, the manager of the Law Accident Insurance Company. In each case a favourable opinion is expressed of the principle of the Act and they look forward with satisfaction to its probable further extension though they suggest certain alterations of detail. Mr. Livesey and Mr. Clifford think the cheap procedure of the Act of 1897 should be applied to the Act of 1880. Mr. Burt points out a desirable alteration of the present rule of compensation whereby a youth's claim is only reckoned on the basis of the small wage he as a youth receives, though he may be seriously crippled for life. Mr. Lionel Holland late M.P. for Bow and Bromley proposed an amendment of this in the House of Commons which was unfortunately not agreed to. When so much is said of the litigation under the Act it is to be remembered that it is

infinitesimal compared with the immense numbers of claims settled without friction or litigation—to use the words of Mr. Burt. As to the cost of insurance Mr. Livesey states that in the gas industry the insurance offices having begun by charging 25s. per cent. now consider 5s. sufficient thus confirming Mr. Chamberlain's estimate.

"Vanity Fair." By W. M. Thackeray. New Century Library. Vol. I. London: Nelson. 3s.

"Vanity Fair." With Introduction by Stephen Gwynn. London: Methuen. 3 vols. 4s. 6d. net.

In an unpretentious but exceedingly pleasant introduction, Mr. Stephen Gwynn points out that when Thackeray on the death of Robert Seymour applied to Dickens to be allowed to illustrate "Pickwick," Dickens was twenty-four years of age and Thackeray twenty-five: "The one man already on the very pinnacle of popularity, the other not yet sure of his vocation. No one in the world suspected that the elder man would catch up the younger in spite of that immense lead." What happened in life promises to be repeated now that copyrights are rapidly running out. Handy but artistic reprints of Dickens have flooded the market for some time past: Thackeray reprints follow sharply on them. The two editions before us are hardly rivals. If Messrs. Methuen's has the advantage of Mr. Gwynn's introduction and of a portrait from a pencil sketch by Richard Doyle, Messrs. Nelson's is a marvel of compactness. Printed on Indian paper, it compresses 784 pages of excellent type into a small pocket volume.

"The Reign of George VI. 1900-1925: a Forecast written in the year 1763." With Preface and Notes by C. Oman. London: Rivingtons. 1899. 2s. 6d.

Professor Oman rescued this little work from the wreckage of an eighteenth-century library in Burford. It is a serious political forecast based on the conditions prevailing at the time it was written. In many respects the author has come near the mark, but the progress of science has wholly upset his major calculations. In years which have yet to dawn he predicted a gigantic naval struggle between Russia and England, but the contest is with up-to-date sailing vessels. Steam was as far from his preconception as the revolt of the American colonies, the French Revolution or the acquisition of a new Britain under the Southern Cross. He foresees England staggering under a National debt of 211 millions sterling which is less than four times the amount it had reached in 1816 and is roughly a third of its present figure. Wide however of the fact as he is in essentials his speculations are very suggestive. They show the limits which a particularly intelligent observer set to the movements of men and nations.

"Who's Who" and "The Englishwoman's Year Book" both published by Messrs. A. and C. Black are two of the first reference books for 1900 to hand. "Who's Who" has already established a place for itself. In such a work accuracy is no doubt extremely difficult to attain. On the whole it is no doubt perfectly trustworthy, but here and there slips occur, and when we are told of the great pressure on the space we are inclined to wonder that certain names have been included. Last year we pointed out that Mr. Rhodes was not chairman of the British South Africa Company till 1896. The statement is repeated in the present issue. "The Englishwoman's Year Book" grows in bulk and popularity. It is ably edited and still further improvements are in contemplation for future issues.

FRENCH LITERATURE.

Lagibasse. By Jean Richepin. Paris: Charpentier. 1899.

Faithful readers of M. Richepin's works have had more reason to be shocked and surprised than the faithful followers of almost any other modern scribe. So pronounced were some of the passages in the *Chansons des Gueux* that they were suppressed; so sensuous were the *Caresses* that mothers murmured, so bold were the *Blasphèmes* that protests and complaints poured in from all sides. Novels followed: *La Glu*, *Les Morts Bizarres* and half a dozen more, all more or less calculated to shock the sensitive but all so powerful that M. Richepin was pronounced by the critics to be a "veritable genius." Many of these works were presented afterwards as plays, but enjoyed only a slight success. Then, the *Chemineau* was produced and Paris—the Paris that had condemned M. Richepin for years—filled the Odéon night after night and applauded the play and clamoured for the actors. The critics rejoiced now that the man whom they had so strongly recommended was at last accepted, appreciated and admired. Then, Paris watched M. Richepin and, recalling his past, wondered what his future would be. He had been bold, blasphemous, sensuous and, in the *Chemineau*, tender. Toinette and her chemineau were his latest creations, different to all others. She, after her fall, nursed her invalid husband devotedly; he, on his return, befriended their boy, both were new Richepin characters. Would he choose romantic themes, abandoning blasphemy? Or would he return to his old loves? Would he fall back on characters in past history, as in *Les Grandes Amoureuses*? Or would he become essentially "modern"? So Paris speculated, and so Paris may go on speculating for, after *Lagibasse*, no one can say what M. Richepin's future will

be or what strange subject he will deal with next. There is nothing odd about Valentin Leleup Marcoussy de Lagibasse when we first meet him, except his name. His family dates from the Crusades. He, himself, is left an orphan in the second chapter and resolves, by allowing the interest of the small fortune he has inherited to accumulate, to add to the lustre of his name by becoming a "glorious philosopher" and to restore his château and grounds which have fallen into decay. So he determines to leave the Oise-Thon district for Paris, and to economise, and to study, and to become a "glorious philosopher" and, eventually, to marry a girl with a fortune great enough to revive the past splendour of his house. After mapping out his programme, Valentin takes train to Paris and chooses a dim pension in a dreary district. It is like no other pension; its boarders are different from all other boarders, its mistress is a mysterious lady who only accepts guests after the permission of her chief boarder—a retired abbé. The holy man, however, takes a fancy to Valentin. He says "C'est bien, c'est bien." He eyes him oddly. He ponders. He says again, "C'est bien, c'est bien." And Valentin, taking a small room, starts his studies. As fellow-students, he has Prosper Brognet and Ladislas Wronsky, both unearthly creatures who speak strangely, behave strangely and study strangely. As neighbours at table he has the Boussins and, their niece, Zénaïde. Often, in the courtyard he meets the abbé who is for ever muttering "C'est bien, c'est bien" and who continues to eye him oddly. Although Valentin is a

(Continued on page 776.)

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We beg leave to state that we decline to return or to enter into correspondence as to rejected communications; and to this rule we can make no exception.

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practical young man he is soon influenced by the wild talk of Wronsky, the mysterious manner of the abbé and the uncanny atmosphere of the house. Often he visits Wronsky. They discuss spiritual matters. They sit for hours together. They visit Prosper, and continue their dangerous conversations until they become highly nervous. Soon, Valentin learns that the abbé is endowed with mysterious faculties. He knows all that goes on, without observing. He can tell people their thoughts. He can do what he likes with anybody. And, suddenly, for no reason, Valentin faints. His nerves become shattered. His health breaks down. He meets the abbé, and tells him of his condition, but the holy man only replies: "C'est bien, c'est bien." Up to now the reader has no very clear idea of what is really taking place, nor does he grow any the wiser as he reads on. Valentin faints again, and believes finally in the occult power of the abbé. He admits as much, but only gets the reply: "Seek Zénaïde." And he suddenly becomes attached to the girl who, like everyone in the house, is unhealthy and eerie. She is a Creole, she is scarcely civilised, she is sixteen but looks ten. Again, Valentin faints; and the abbé tells him that Zénaïde has fainted too. When Valentin is hysterical, she is also. When Valentin cannot sleep, she is no less awake. There is a mysterious sympathy between the two. Weeks pass; then, one morning, Valentin passes with an envelope and the abbé tells him that he knows what words are within. Valentin declares that his soul belongs to the priest on the spot and that he wishes to learn the secret of his alarming powers. The abbé says: "C'est bien, c'est bien," and tells him to fast at certain times, and to remain alone at certain hours and to repeat, at certain periods, the word AUM. His victim carries out these instructions faithfully, and is rewarded by the startling appearance of the abbé when he is alone in his room. The doors are locked, the windows are closed, but the abbé has managed to find his way in all the same. What is more, he floats in the air. What is worse, he speaks: "Avec Aum, avec Aum, avec Uma, avec Uam, avec Mau, avec Mua, avec Aum, salut et bénédiction en Tô, Océan du Tout dont je suis la goutte Rien, Océan du Rien dont je suis la goutte Tout! Amen." He speaks in this strain for almost an hour; and although his harangue may not have any effect on the mind of the reader it so terrifies Valentin that, after a gigantic effort, he resolves to throw off the evil influence of the abbé and to escape. He cannot go without Zénaïde, however; and, strangely enough, Zénaïde is ready waiting for him. So they travel together to Valentin's country house and arrive there, after a long journey, at midnight. As day dawns, he is surprised to find Zénaïde standing at his side, but, when he is about to speak, Zénaïde runs from the house into the park, and out into the country. Valentin, of course, follows. When he finds her at last, and tries to clasp her in his arms, she resists. They struggle; they beat one another, suddenly, they fall to the ground, dead. Peasants find them, and are astonished. They are still more amazed when an abbé, appearing mysteriously upon the scene, views the bodies calmly and mutters over them: "C'est bien, c'est bien." . . . *Lagibasse* is, without doubt, an extraordinary book.

Léon Say: sa Vie, ses Œuvres. By Georges Michel. Paris: Calmann-Lévy. 1899.

To follow M. Léon Say's career from his birth in 1826 until his death seventy years later is the gigantic task undertaken by M. Georges Michel in this bulky volume. He has been engaged in it for three years, and gathered so much material, so many original documents, that he not only succeeds in giving a comprehensive biography but also a political, social and, of course, a financial picture of the times. His sketch of the Say family is at once interesting, and shows how Léon got his taste for financial questions, and how through watching the commercial operations of his brothers (not always successful), he became thoroughly acquainted with all money-matters. Nor was this all. An indefatigable worker, Léon Say made it his task to study the financial history of France from its beginning and, in 1848, published a pamphlet on the "Caisse d'Escompte" which attracted some attention and probably gained him his post on the *Journal des Débats*, then in the height of its power and fame. Shortly after he was named "Conseiller-Général" of the Seine and Oise district, and his public career at once began. The chapters that follow are chiefly devoted to the siege of Paris and to the founding of the National Assembly, as well as to Léon Say's careful analysis of the financial condition of France at that time. His reforms are reviewed, his days as Minister and his quarrels with his colleagues. Although the rest of the book is chiefly devoted to the examination of the budget or of some loan or of some liquidation, portraits of prominent men are given here and there. We meet Thiers, MacMahon, Waddington, Grévy and a score more; we read of Léon Say's quarrel with Gambetta, and of his friends in the Senate, we see him in the Académie Française and in charge of the financial side of the Exhibition of 1889. And, in conclusion, we get a charming picture of the great financial Minister in private life. Since the volume contains almost six hundred pages, M. Georges Michel adds to it a capital appendix and a critical list of the works that have already appeared on M. Léon Say. Both are useful and as carefully prepared as the rest of this admirable book.

Philibert. By Louis Riballier. Paris: Plon. 1899.

These are the reflections and memoirs of a young man of thirty: "Fages," says the cover, "de la trentième année." These are also the first words that the author has offered to the reading-world. He traces his career, step by step, from the moment that he enters school to the hour that he meets the girl whom he wishes to marry. She, however, is worldly; and, as he has neither riches nor even prospects, she refuses to listen to his proposals. She is wise here, we think, for the young man is a prig, an egoist and a bore. He has the heart to suffer a little, however, as he fulfils his military duties. On his return he rescues a seamstress from death in the Seine. He carries her to his home, because he does not know her address and because she is unconscious. He calls in a nurse, for she becomes stricken with fever. He hears from her on her recovery that she has no home of her own. And she is foolish enough to love him and to become his mistress. He wearies of her; she dies before the inevitable separation can take place, and, as a last request, begs him to marry. Should he find anyone willing to share his life, we hope very much that he will not deem it necessary to record his impressions of marriage. He is not interesting at thirty; we shrink from wondering what he will be at forty and we trust that he will be wise enough at sixty to abandon all idea of writing another book.

Paris, de 1800 à 1900. Edited by M. Charles Simond. Paris: Plon. 1899.

The third part of this exhaustive publication is devoted to the political, social, literary and theatrical events that took place in Paris from 1810 to 1814. "Fêtes, balls, ceremonies and receptions," were the order of the day, but the most important of all was, of course, the marriage of Napoleon and Marie-Louise on 1 April, 1810. Several capital illustrations of the fêtes given in honour of the birth of the King of Rome follow, and plates of the fashions, carriages and popular games of that time. There are plans of Paris for each of the four years, also, and several critical articles. The third part, in short, fulfils the expectations inspired by the first and makes one look forward to the appearance of the fourth.

Impressions d'Espagne. By Maria Starr. Paris: Ollendorff. 1899.

From the moment that the author of this picturesque little volume sees Madrid, to the moment that she bids farewell to Spain, she does her best to enter into the spirit of her surroundings. A shrewd observer, and proprietor of a capital camera, she has succeeded in recording a number of interesting impressions and in illustrating them by a series of striking little portraits and pictures. Her style, too, is graceful, and helps to make the recital of her travels more vivid and more interesting than the pretentious pictures that other observers have given of Spain.

For This Week's Books see page 779.

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